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IN THE SHADOWS

RAOUL ARNAUD

IN THE SHADOWS



MADAME DE LA FAYETTE.

(After a picture of the period in the possession of Madame de Corcelle.)

IN THE SHADOWS

THREE HEROINES OF THE
REVOLUTION

BY

RAOUL ARNAUD

TRANSLATED BY

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A HEROINE OF CONJUGAL PIETY :

MADAME DE LA FAYETTE

Marie-Adrienne-Françoise de Noailles, born at Paris on November 2, 1759, was the daughter of Jean-Paul-François de Noailles, Duc d'Ayen, and of Anne-Louise-Henriette Daguesseau. On April 11, 1774, in the Chapel of the Hôtel de Noailles, she married Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette, born on September 6, 1757, the only son of Gilbert de La Fayette and of Marie-Louise-Julie de la Rivière.

Adrienne de Noailles had four sisters : Louise, born in 1758, who married her cousin, the Vicomte de Noailles ; Pauline, born in 1766, who married the Marquis de Montagu ; Rosalie, born in 1767, who became Comtesse and later Marquise de Grammont ; and Madame de Thézan, who died in 1788.

AT SEVEN O'CLOCK on the morning of the 10th of September, 1792, the Château of La Fayette, situated at Chavaniac in the Upper Allier Valley, was beginning to show signs of life. Built on a small hill, the Château, which had just been undergoing restoration, had that pleasant aspect peculiar to inhabited dwellings, and its broad, white front, flanked by four towers and surmounted by a campanile, was clearly visible through the trees. Here and there shutters were being thrown open, and servants were passing along the terrace ; a farm girl crossed the yard, and a clerk employed by Vaudroyer, the architect, was busy taking some measurements. In her room on the first floor, Madame de La Fayette was writing a letter to her son, then a boy of twelve, whom she had sent with his tutor to stay with a priest in the mountains, as soon as she learned of the Decree of the National Assembly ordering her husband's arrest. La Fayette, who had been obliged to resign his appointment as Commandant of the National Guard in October 1791, had been placed at the head, first of the Army of the Centre and then of the Army of the North. The obligations of a General falling lightly on him, he had let himself

become absorbed in politics, and had several times visited Paris, where he had appeared at the Bar of the Assembly. Finally, after a futile resistance to the insurrectional Commune of August 10th, mistrusted by his own soldiers and on the point of being himself arrested as a rebel, he had reached the frontier with Alexandre de Lameth and twenty-one Staff officers, and had been made prisoner by Austrian troops in the neighbourhood of Liège.

At Paris there were cries of "Treason," and Madame de La Fayette had been astounded to learn from the papers the swift change of public opinion. The hero acclaimed in those days of October, the popular Commandant of the National Guard, the "splendid" La Fayette, whose boots had been kissed by a delirious crowd on July 14th, 1790, was now no more than a "scoundrel, an impostor, and the worst of criminals." His statue had been broken up, it was proposed to destroy his house, and a price had been put on his head. Proscribed by the Assembly and abandoned by his Army, he would certainly have been beheaded had he not fled the country and thereby placed his family in danger.

Accustomed from childhood by her mother, the Duchesse d'Ayen, to beware of illusions, Adrienne de Noailles, although she had been married at a very early age to the fascinating Marquis de La Fayette, had foreseen the reversal of his "astounding popularity" when the time came that her husband had sacrificed everything. She knew herself to be menaced, having been

warned of this from several sources, and now chose to await the development of events, if only to safeguard her material interests. She was not afraid to face danger herself, but fearing it for her children, she had sent them away out of its reach. On August 25th her two daughters had by her orders been taken to Langeac, a neighbouring estate purchased by La Fayette in 1786, and there they had stayed had it not been that Anastasie, the elder, whose fifteen years made her anxious to share her mother's worries, had insisted on being brought back to Chavaniac, where she had arrived with her sister on the previous evening.

With the assistance of their governess, the two girls were dressing in their room. Anastasie was nearly ready, but Virginie, a child of ten, understanding little or nothing of what was going on around her and finding all these changes rather amusing, had taken a longer time to get up.

Suddenly from the direction of the road leading to Saint-Georges-d'Aurat came the measured tread of heavy feet, and a troop of armed men poured into the courtyard. The passing peasant-girl and the architect's clerk at his measuring were held up, the former driven out of the yard and the latter stood against a tree, with threats of instant death if he dared move.

Mademoiselle Benoit, the companion of Madame de Chavaniac, the aunt who had brought up La Fayette from the time he had been orphaned, was on her way up the stairs to call her mistress when she learned of the arrival of the soldiers and

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heard them opening the doors of the house. Dashing into the old lady's room, she exclaimed :

“Get up ! Get up ! Madame.”

“Whatever is the matter, Benoit ? ”

“Ah, Jesus, Mary ! Look out of the window. The courtyard is full of them already. Hurry up, hurry up, Madame ! ”

“But whom are you talking about ? ” enquired La Fayette's aunt, who was by no means of a timid nature.

“Who ? Who ? You will drive me mad with your who's. Soldiers of all sorts and all colours, armed to the teeth.”

“Where are they from ? ”

“From Hell, doubtless ; but please hurry, Madame ! I can hear them coming up.”

They were, in effect, coming up, and the great staircase and the first-floor corridor were full of soldiers. Several had penetrated to the dining-room, and one of these, a man of immense stature, proceeded without knocking into the room where Madame de La Fayette was busy writing. She only just had time to conceal her letter.

“What do you want, and who are you ? ” she enquired.

“Have no fear. We are from Puy.”

Now soldiers were flocking into the room, and some of the troop had settled themselves on the tapestried arm-chairs, the sofas, and around the bed that was hung with red satin. The Marquise remained calm, for though hesitant in the ordinary circumstances of life, she carried off difficult situa-

tions with ingenuity and simplicity. Courageously facing the brigands who had broken into her dwelling and thinking only of her two daughters, she said to her maid :

“ We must try to save the children at all costs.”

She spoke in low tones, but was evidently overheard or understood, for :

“ No one must attempt to leave the room,” commanded the man who had been the first to enter, “ or everyone will be killed.”

Just at that moment arrived one who seemed to be the leader of the expedition, a horrible-looking man with a hare-lip and sinister features. His brown coat, edged with red, gave him somewhat the appearance of an escaped convict, but Madame de La Fayette went boldly to meet him. She seemed just as much at ease in the midst of these ruffians as at one of her mother's receptions at the Hôtel de Noailles or at her own house in the Rue de Lille.

“ I am the Commissary,” began the man.

“ Your name, please ? ” retorted the Marquise.

“ Alphonse Aulagnier.”

Madame de La Fayette shuddered, for this was the bandit whom common rumour accused of the recent assassination of Monsieur de Chabannes, but she managed to conceal her agitation, and enquired :

“ Where are your orders, Monsieur ? ”

Aulagnier groped in his coat pocket and drew out an order from the Committee of General Security of the National Assembly, signed by Vadon, Grangeneuve, and Bazire, “ requiring the

public authority and all citizens concerned to seize . . . the La Fayette lady and conduct her, from district to district, to Paris, with her children and servants," and a letter from Roland, Minister of the Interior, "charging Alphonse Aulagnier, magistrate at Puy, to carry out the order of the Committee of Public Security with all speed at Chavaniac, and to requisition the necessary public force to cause the arrest of the wife of La Fayette and to bring her under safe conduct with her children, if they are found with her, to a house of security in the town of Paris."

All was in perfect order, and she had no possible means of offering resistance when there were two hundred men in the house, all ready for plunder; and in the hamlet of Chavaniac, whose low houses seemed part and parcel of the Château, there were only women at that hour, for the menfolk were in the fields and not very numerous. The best plan appeared to be not to excite this band, but, on the contrary, feign obedience and be taken as soon as possible to Puy, where Madame de La Fayette could seek the protection of the authorities. She knew herself to be capable of arguing the legality of the decree affecting her and of proving that her husband was absent, but not an *émigré*. Accustomed to think of others rather than of herself, she hoped that her children would be overlooked, and endeavoured to save from sack the château where La Fayette had assembled his trophies of the Revolution and his campaigns in America. She announced, therefore, that she was

ready to follow the Commissary, and gave orders that the four black horses should be harnessed to the big, yellow coach.

However, there was still a hitch in the preparations, for there entered at that moment Anastasie, La Fayette's elder daughter, who had no intention of being forgotten or ignored, and kissed her mother, calling her by name so as to deprive her of all means of deserting her. Aulagnier, moreover, showed that he had every intention of carrying out the orders he bore.

Madame de La Fayette had, luckily, already taken certain precautions, for on August 24th, while everyone was at Vespers, she had gone into the record room with her son's tutor, Monsieur Frestel, "who was as one of the family," and had hidden or burned all mementoes, contracts, and deeds. Better still, on an application from the Marquise, who saw therein, and not without reason, one way of forestalling pillage, two commissaries of the district had on August 29th placed their seals on Chavaniac and drawn up a thorough inventory of the furniture, which rendered searchwork and investigation a simple matter.

Madame de La Fayette had but to detach the pockets from her skirt and hand them to Aulagnier, who opened them, found some keys and a pocket-book containing three letters from La Fayette. One of these letters, dated April 18th previous, proved the General's attachment to the Constitution he had voted for; in the two others, of more recent date and written from Rochefort, he

apprised his wife and his aunt of his flight, and his arrest by the Austrians. All three displayed perfect sincerity and that chivalrous disinterestedness that animated him throughout his life.

"My ill-fortune," he wrote to Madame de Chavaniac, "has altered neither my principles nor my speech; my conscience is clear and calm"; and to Madame de La Fayette, "I make no excuses either to you or to my children for having ruined my family. There is none among you who would care to owe his fortune to conduct in opposition to his conscience."

While Aulagnier read these letters,

"You will see therein," said the General's wife, "that, if there were tribunals in France, Monsieur de La Fayette would have appeared before them, confident that there would be no action in his life which might compromise him in the eyes of Patriots."

"To-day, Madame," replied the Commissary with a shrug, as he went on with his reading, "tribunals are composed of public opinion."

Everyone was now gathered in the Marquise's room, including the Comtesse de Chavaniac, an old and withered lady, who wore on her grey hair a bonnet of white muslin, whilst her thin, frail body was decked with a full gown of some violet material. No sooner had she entered than she started questioning the Commissary, expressing her surprise in her usual rather haughty familiarity, blending her French with the local dialect. She remarked how, ten months previously, the gardens were daily

thronged with National Guards from Paris, from Lyons, and from near-by stations, who had come to acclaim the General ; how she herself had had her share in these " displays of interest and respect " when the citizen-militia from Brioude had come especially to congratulate her on being the aunt of La Fayette, and how now, without the slightest respect for her old age, an armed troop dared to invade the Château and molest its inhabitants !

The soldiers were overrunning the whole house, heedless of the Comtesse de Chavaniac's violent language, and had even got up as far as the old lady's apartment, where her companion, Made-moiselle Benoit, had remained.

" Where is the traitor La Fayette ? " they demanded.

" In his skin, probably," came the prompt reply.

Infuriated at such a retort, and seeing a portrait of the General on the wall, they proceeded to stab it in the head and the heart, and rummaged everywhere, visiting the parlour, the great hall, the chapel, La Fayette's room, and his green study.

{Desks, bureaux, and other furniture being covered with the seal of the district of Brioude, which Aulagnier thought himself bound to respect, the search was soon over, and everyone was ready to make a start, but the carriage was not at the door, owing to the absence of the coachman, who was at last discovered asleep in a barn. Madame de La Fayette fretted over this delay, fearing lest the soldiers might take it into their heads to visit the

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room where Virginie was concealed with her governess. This room had been overlooked in the search, although it communicated with that of the Marquise, who, finding herself alone for a moment with her aunt and the servants, said through the door :

"Hide, Virginie, behind the hangings of the mantelpiece !"

"No," interrupted Madame de Chavaniac, "dress her up as a peasant girl."

Aulagnier's men were out of hearing, for they had gathered in the gallery, whose new decorations they were admiring. This long apartment was hung with paintings, some recalling La Fayette's campaigns in America, and others the various events of the Revolution. Amongst the pictures were "The Capture of the Bastille," "The Quest of Madame de La Fayette," "The Prince de Lambesc's Charge at the Tuileries."

"It seems strange to create such beautiful things," remarked the soldiers, "and then go off and become a traitor."

"Ah, Messieurs," exclaimed Madame de Chavaniac, who had just entered the gallery with her niece, "there is no greater patriot than my poor nephew."

"When he becomes a traitor," added Madame de La Fayette, "I will willingly allow my head to be cut off. I only ask that it may be proved a certainty first. After all that he has done, and thinking the thoughts he thinks, he would be worthy of our curses, were he to march against

his country, instead of being beloved by us as he is ! ”

“ That is so,” said Anastasie crying ; “ but then we could no longer love him as he would not be the same.”

The soldiers then started to laugh in a kindly way and to descend to the front of the Château, where the carriage was now drawn up. Anastasie refused to leave go of her mother’s hand. Aulagnier remarked to Madame de Chavaniac that he had no order especially affecting her, but La Fayette’s aunt, then seventy-three years of age, deeply attached to her native district and whom no consideration had ever persuaded to leave Chavaniac, declared that she would never be separated from her niece. The Commissary thereupon authorized the Comtesse to enter the carriage with Madame de La Fayette and Anastasie. Two maids, Mesdemoiselles Grenier and Benjamin, followed their mistress, whilst three menservants, Mercier, Evrard, and Saint-Flour, climbed on to the box-seat beside the coachman. A few peasants, seeming indifferent or resigned, but inwardly vexed at their inability to do anything, were spectators of the scene. Aulagnier had got to horse, and his men had taken their places around the carriage, when a man stepped up to the door :

“ Shall I go and see Monsieur George ? ”

“ Certainly, but stop talking of that now,” was the Marquise’s sharp reply.

Monsieur Vaudroyer, the architect, came forward to pay his respects, and enquired :

“Mademoiselle Virginie is remaining behind, then?”

“For Heaven’s sake leave me, Monsieur!”

By good fortune, the Commissary heard nothing of this and gave the order to start, forgetting or pretending to forget that the General possessed three children, to the infinite relief of Madame de La Fayette, who had had the foresight to send George away, and whose calm courage had prevented Virginie’s arrest.

All settled down in the carriage, which started off, and leaving on the left the long drive lined with beech and ash that led to Paulhaghet, the caravan took the main road to Puy. A halt was made at Villeneuve, to allow the men a drink and the horses a breather, and here the peasant-women wept or crossed themselves in secret. Then followed the steep hill climbing up to Fix, a badly laid and almost impracticable road, the most difficult in all Auvergne. If a horse fell or any harness broke, all would be lost without hope of recovery. The horses were lathered with foam, for they were drawing eight people, and at times the men of the escort clung on to the steps, climbed on the box, and dumped their kits on the roof. At Fix, where the entry to the place was awkward, there was a fresh halt, and this time for the night. It was necessary to make the best of the only inn in the town as sleeping-quarters. The travellers were waited on with marked respect by the inn-keeper’s little daughters, and dined gaily and with appetite, except Madame de Chavaniac, who asked

for nothing but a glass of sweetened water. She had no fear of death but of prison, remarking :

“Do you think I want to go into that dreadful place, I who never leave my home ?”

About nine o'clock, when all was settling down in the inn, whose gates were guarded by sentries, a great noise arose in the courtyard, with shouts of “To arms ! To arms !” from the soldiers.

Madame de La Fayette had been placed in the least uncomfortable room with her daughter, her aunt, and a servant, who was lying on a mattress. She thought, perhaps, rescuers had arrived.

“They will kill each other, Aunt !” she exclaimed.

“Eh, Madame, let them do so ; let them kill each other, if they want to.”

This, however, was no part of the soldiers' plan, for they had merely picked a quarrel with a peasant whose wife, once in service at Chavaniac, had insisted upon seeing her former mistresses. Officers appeared on the scene and calmed their men, and the rest of the night passed peacefully and quietly. Anastasie and Madame de Chavaniac slept soundly, but Madame de La Fayette watched over the sleep of her daughter and was already dressed when, at two o'clock, *réveillé* was sounded, as had been agreed upon with the Commissary. It was the signal to prepare for departure. Anastasie and her aunt jumped out of bed, knelt to their prayers, and dressed in haste. The innkeeper's little daughters brought bowls of hot milk and were caressed and thanked by the ladies who then

descended to the road, guarded by the troop. In the silence of night, by moonlight that lit up the hills of Briançon and Bar and imparted fantastic shapes to the roadside trees, the caravan continued its route.

It was close on midday when they arrived at Puy, a town built on a rock and overshadowed by an imposing cathedral. Approach to the town was up an incline, flanked by low houses roofed with glazed tiles. In this quarter of the town, where a prisoner had been murdered a few days previously, a hostile crowd howled insults, and stones were thrown at them; but the soldiers forced a passage, and the carriage made its way to the little Place du Greffe. Madame de La Fayette insisted upon being taken to the Town Hall, where the Directorate of the Department was situated, and her desire was acceded to. The members of the Directorate were summoned in haste, and when they were assembled, Aulagnier introduced the prisoners to the hall. Monsieur de Montfleury was presiding, but the Marquise did not wait for Vissaguet, the Proctor-General, to question her.

"I respect, said she, "the authority of the people, and I place myself with perfect confidence under the protection of its representatives. You may receive your orders from Monsieur Roland, or from whom you wish, but as for me, I have no desire to receive mine from any but you, and I therefore constitute myself your prisoner."

Her words lacked neither skill nor courage, and won over a large number of the representatives

to the cause of Madame de La Fayette, who put up a vigorous defence in her husband's favour. She was simple and touching, made no concessions to either Aristocrats nor Jacobins, and showed herself a vigorous supporter of her husband's opinions. She requested permission to read aloud the letters seized by Aulagnier. One member remarked that such reading might prove painful to her.

"On the contrary, Monsieur," retorted the plucky woman, "the sentiments expressed in these letters sustain and comfort me!" and in a voice broken with emotion, but steadied by sheer will-power, she began :

"There will never be anything in common between crime and myself. I was the last to uphold the Constitution I gave my vows to. . . . I have become the object of attacks from all sides. . . . My soul is given over to profound grief, but my conscience is clear.'"

When she reached the passage where the General declared that he had without remorse sacrificed his fortune to his ideals and thereby ruined his family, the members of the Department were ready to cheer, and then the "woman La Fayette," as she condescended to call herself, knew that the day was hers. Gifted with a vivid imagination, but also with a clear head, she contested every point with her judges, and finally told them that, encouraged by the just confidence they inspired in her, she took the liberty of pointing out to them that in disagreeing about transferring her to Paris,

they were not contravening in any way the spirit of the orders they had received from Monsieur Roland ; that so long as she remained within the confines of the Department, whether they trusted to her word or took steps to guard her person, she would still be a hostage for him for whom it would always be an honour to go bail and whose sentiments she gloried in sharing ; that she saw no obstacle to her request being acceded to or at least discussed. . . .

The matter was discussed, but the Department, well-disposed as it might be, could not restore freedom to the prisoners without reference to the Minister of the Interior. It decided, however, not to carry out Roland's orders *in toto* for the translation of the person of Madame de La Fayette and that of her daughter to Paris. The Marquise, Anastasie, and Madame de Chavaniac were kept at the headquarters of the Administration for the time being.

It was a kindly imprisonment. Madame de La Fayette was at liberty to do anything she pleased save run away, and received many touching testimonials of interest, for it was easy to get permission to visit her. The National Guards on duty near her always showed her a great deal of kindness, having for the most part solicited that duty in order that she might be saved from uncomfortable supervision.

It was from the Directorate that the Marquise wrote her famous letter to Brissot, whom she was well acquainted with, having frequently received

him in her salon in the Rue de Lille, in which she said to that most dogmatic of Republicans :

I believe you to be a genuine fanatic of Liberty . . . I am sure that you esteem, I might almost say respect, Monsieur de La Fayette . . . That is why I am addressing myself to you, disdaining to do so to others. If I absolutely *must* be kept as a hostage, my captivity might be ameliorated by allowing me to spend it at Chavaniac, on my parole and the responsibility of the council of my village. If you will help me, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you will have done a great deal towards lightening the lot of one who is being unjustly persecuted.

I consent to owe this service to you.

NOAILLES DE LA FAYETTE.

The tone of this letter, its haughty style, and the impertinent expression at its close, could not fail to deeply wound Brissot's pride. Naturally vain and susceptible to boot, the journalist was not in reality a spiteful kind of man, and if he loathed his opponents' views, he certainly bore no personal grudge against them. He approached Roland, Minister of the Interior, pleaded Madame de La Fayette's cause, obtained what she asked and contented himself with a purely literary revenge. He made pretence of disdaining to reply to the lady, but persuaded Roland to write her a letter, full of insults to General de la Fayette, impertinences to the Marquise, and finishing by stating that the expression she had used of "consenting to owe him a service" belonged to the obsolete pride of what had been termed nobility.

This reply reached Puy at the end of September, was read and exuberantly cheered by the Directorate of the Department, whose older and more

moderate members had been swept out by the Jacobin brush and replaced by "pure" patriots. Beneath the violence of its expressions, however, the Minister's letter concealed a measure of clemency, permitting Madame de La Fayette to return to Chavaniac as a prisoner on parole, and whatever the feelings of the patriots, they found themselves obliged to carry out the order and release the *ci-devant* Marquise as well as her aunt and daughter. For greater security, Maret and Pissis, two Administrators of the Department, were ordered to accompany them to Chavaniac and hand them over to the safe-keeping of the Commune of Saint-Georges-d'Aurat.

Madame de La Fayette was no sooner out of prison than she learned of the painful situation her husband was in. He had hoped to be able to get to England, but the King of Prussia had decided that he must be regarded as a prisoner and that it was of the highest importance to treat him as such. The papers announced that from Rochefort he had been taken, with his companions in misfortune, in the direction of Brussels, where the Prince of Saxe-Teschen was in command, and that then he had been directed to Arlon, where the share out of prisoners had taken place on September 3rd. All had been freed or punished with a few weeks of imprisonment. The sole exceptions were La Fayette, Lameth, Latour-Maubourg, and Bureaux de Pusy, who had been retained as hostages and sent via Luxemburg and Treves to Coblenz, where they had arrived on

September 15th. From there, the newspapers reported, they were to proceed to Spandau, to be interned in a fortress.

When the Marquise de La Fayette received this distressing news, she regretted that she had given an undertaking to remain at Chavaniac, but it was too late to take back her word. She returned to the old Château, fuming at the impotence she had condemned herself to, but resolved to shrink from no step or sacrifice to save whom she revered and loved above all.

II

MADAME DE LA FAYETTE reached Chavaniac on the evening of October 3rd, with the two Commissaries whom the Departmental Administration had deputed to accompany her. The officials of Saint-Georges-d'Aurat who had volunteered to keep an eye on her were awaiting her in front of the Château. She was welcomed with unequivocal expressions of sympathy by these worthy folk who had always held her husband's family in great esteem. Greeting them cordially, she replied, not without a certain touch of malice, to the Mayor's address of welcome :

“Monsieur Roland believes that it is owing to my aristocratic origin that I dislike being indebted to him for a service, and yet I feel that great pleasure and great honour are being afforded me in being placed under the protection of these gentlemen of d'Aurat because I hold them in such esteem.”

This little speech was uttered in terms of kindly feeling towards the municipal officials but also of scathing irony towards the Commissaries, who had showed their approval at the same time as the other members of the Directorate of Roland's brutal letter, and who at Puy, on their suggestion to

place an armed post at Chavaniac, had received this haughty retort from the prisoner :

“ I shall withdraw the parole I offered if soldiers are to be placed at my door. Choose, then, between two sureties. You will permit me to believe in my own honesty, and that my given word does not require reinforcing with bayonets.”

The Administration of the Department had chosen the part that might least compromise them and had proposed to the Municipality of d'Aurat the responsibility of watching over the Marquise, but they took pains to show their mistrust of the kindly officials who had had no option but to accept, and doubtless Maret and Pissis, the two Commissaries, bitterly regretted their colleagues' decision on witnessing the marks of respect and affection paid to the Marquise and the joy evoked by her return.

All Chavaniac was at the Château, and folks, too, had come in their multitudes from d'Aurat, Saint-Eble, Fix, and Paulhaghet. The women had donned their lace corsets and Sunday scarves, the men their holiday garments. Those who belonged to the Militia were wearing their uniforms, the officials had on their tricolour sashes and their badges of office, others wore tricolour cockades in their big, black felt hats which they were waving in token of their rejoicing.

The presence of the members of the Directorate had rather a damping effect on the enthusiasm of the crowd, since they represented Authority and were strangers to a countryside that held them

responsible for and disapproved of this deportation. Then, too, their mission was over, and so after confiding, with all due solemnity, the person of the Marquise to the care of the Mayor of the Commune, they betook themselves back to Puy, their departure being the signal for the outburst of such rejoicing as their presence had restrained. Madame de La Fayette made her way through the throng, shook the hands held out to her, and kissed some of the women folk, whilst the servants of the Château departed in quest of wine and glasses. Everyone drank and toasted the happy return of the Marquise and the early deliverance of the General, and merrymaking was prolonged until late at night. Farge, the mayor; Bonne, the proctor syndic; and other members of the Municipality of d'Aurat remained at the Château, where they had been bidden to supper by their protégée, and the great gallery of Chavaniac, which a few weeks before had been invaded by a hostile band, rang with patriotic songs, expressions of devotion, and ingenuous encouragements to hope.

However, once the councillors had departed, the Château in its normal state of quietude appeared to Madame de La Fayette in the sorrowful guise that ravished habitations seem to assume. Aulagnier's soldiery had left their mark and robbed the family home of its privacy. Rugs had been foot-marked and hangings soiled; some pictures had been torn down and others broken; cupboards sealed and furniture disarranged. Well-known objects had become unfamiliar to the Marquise, since she no



THE CHATEAU DE CHAVANIAC.
Present day.

longer found in them the memory of her husband, who always took such pleasure in coming and staying at Chavaniac, his birth-place.

It was to La Fayette that her thoughts constantly turned, and she was indeed only occupied with him. Each time he had left her—and he had had to do so within a few months of their marriage—she had experienced a sorrow that plainly revealed the love she felt for him. She was so disturbed on the first night she spent after reaching Chavaniac that, despite her fatigue, she did not retire to bed ; and Monsieur Frestel, tutor to George de La Fayette, left the retreat where he was living in hiding with his pupil to come and confer with her. The days that ensued were very painful ones for the Marquise, for she was suffering in silence, being used to concealing her private doubts, fears, and scruples under a cloak of determination. She reproached herself for her rashness in lightly giving her parole, by virtue of which, for her own and her children's sakes, she had undertaken not to leave Chavaniac. She was ashamed of being at liberty and desperate at not being able to utilize that liberty to go to the assistance of the one person in the world who had her alone to rely upon. She even dreamed of escaping and thus breaking the chains she had forged with her own hands. How much rather she would have had round her guards whom she could possibly have bribed or won over to her cause, for she was well aware that no one in the district of Brioude, where several parishes had requested the honour of belonging to the Canton

where La Fayette lived, would dare to stop her ! The very idea of such an escape seemed to haunt her, nor could her usual occupations—the care she exercised over her children's education, or her material anxieties—succeed in thrusting this obsession on one side. Even when she went riding to get fresh air and cure the headaches that rendered her nights sleepless, the temptation not to return dogged her. Many and many a time, sitting with her aunt and her daughters on the terrace before the Château, whence by an irony of fate the view stretched illusively over the Chaliergues plain from the Mountains of the Dome to the bare Margeride, she felt overcome with a burning desire to stifle her remorse by slipping away from that peaceful countryside that now seemed to fill her with dissatisfaction. However, stronger than bolts, gaolers or guards was the restraint imposed upon that plucky woman by her given ord.

Whilst aimlessly roaming over the country from Villeneuve to Chilhac, from Saint-Georges to Brioude, with such ideas whirling through her brain, she must doubtless on occasions have strayed a long way from Chavaniac. Mayhap she was seen out late on the roads and was reported, for the news reached Puy of her involuntary plans of escape, and at a public session on October 12th, the Directorate of the Department delegated two citizens, Martin and Bertrand Noël, to go and investigate.

These Commissaries merely contented themselves with obtaining fresh assurance from the

Municipality of d'Aurat that the word of Madame de La Fayette could be fully relied upon, but the Administration of Puy, fearful of losing their captive, deprived her henceforth, as the wife of an *émigré*, of the right to leave her home without a permit from the mayor or the proctor of the Commune. This added to the Marquise's scruples the fear—in the event of her flight—of putting the d'Aurat officials, who were kind to her, in a position of danger, and condemned her to a confinement the more dreadful since by giving her a mere illusion of freedom, it doubled her desire to recover it.

Madame de La Fayette's sole remaining hope was to see herself officially released from her promise. So passionate were her feelings towards her husband that she even went so far as to entreat Roland, who had insulted her, to restore her parole ; further still, she wrote to Brissot, who had just made a brilliant defence in the Assembly and the Press on behalf of the liberation of black slaves, beseeching him to free from slavery a woman who asked no freedom other than that of being thrust behind the walls of the fortress of Spandau.

Monsieur Bauchet, the husband of a faithful servant and himself almost a friend, undertook the transport of these letters to Paris and was received by Brissot with a circumspection that expressed itself in vague sentences. Roland showed himself kinder and, indeed, this "Cato" was both a great and an honest man. He was deeply moved by the touching appeal made to him, but, still influenced

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by the September Massacres, he could only promise Madame de La Fayette that, when circumstances preventing anyone of her name from travelling in France were altered, he would hasten to oblige her.

This was but a very small ray of hope, and if it made duty more bearable, it certainly failed to sooth the anxiety that was consuming the poor woman. She was filled with the greatest enthusiasm for her husband, and as he himself said, she loved him in every way—spiritually, mundanely, and passionately. Never had she displayed the slightest trace of discontent or jealousy, and had forgiven him his absences before even he had knelt to her to excuse himself for being a wanderer, his dreams of glory that had had such terrible consequences, and even the successes he had sought and found with women like Madame de Simiane, Madame de Hunolstein, Madame de Tessé, and so many others. She admitted that she considered herself as having the better part by being his wife, and it was enough for her that he condescended to love her. He had so great an attraction for her that on his return from America she was almost sick with pleasure every time he entered a room where she happened to be.

Knowing him thus a prisoner, far from her, and being without news of him as though the door of a tomb had been closed on him, to be condemned to such inconceivable persecution and not to be able to share his captivity, no words can faithfully describe the state of her heart.

However, not being one to let herself be beaten

or robbed of her hopes, and being accustomed from childhood to distinguish between illusions and the real and simple, she realized that her detention at Chavaniac might be prolonged indefinitely, and that she should without further delay delegate someone to take the steps she was prevented from carrying out herself. After a great deal of hesitation, she decided to send her son in her stead, accompanied by Monsieur Frestel, his tutor, in whom she had every confidence.

George de La Fayette was only twelve, but he accepted this pious mission with enthusiasm, brushing aside the last scruples, seeking to soothe the Marquise's anxiety (had he not for three years held the rank of lieutenant in the National Guard ?), and displayed great courage in leaving without kissing anyone, either his aunt, who might have detained him or made a fuss, or his mother, who had hidden herself at the time of his departure, lest she fail to control the dictates of her heart. The boy, provided with a passport and a merchant's certificate in the name of Monsieur Frestel, was to make for Bordeaux, take ship to England, and seek out Mr. Pinkney, the United States Ambassador in London, in order to discuss with him what might be done to assist General La Fayette.

It was towards that America where her husband "had been crowned at the hands of Victory" that the hopes of Madame de La Fayette were now directed.

The title of American Citizen which the General had received from the State of Maryland in 1775

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now seemed to the Marquise not merely a mark of admiration, but a means of having the prisoner claimed by the United States as one of their Nationals. To attain this result she had parted with her son, and had also written to Washington, whose "name she had learned to adore" and whom she knew to be greatly attached to La Fayette. She fancied he would give heed to the prayer of one who had claims on his consideration, both as a French or an American woman and as the wife of his esteemed friend. Fearing lest George might encounter difficulties in leaving France, she handed the letter to one John Dyson, a young Englishman who had stayed for some time with her family and was on the point of departure for America. She begged of Washington that a vessel might be sent to demand the prisoner at the hands of Austria and take him back to America, even though it were as a captive.

It was at this juncture that Gouverneur Morris, the new Ambassador of the United States at Paris, offered his support to La Fayette's wife. Before being charged with an official mission, Morris had resided for some considerable time in France, and, mingling with the political world for reasons of business, had become on friendly terms with the Commandant of the National Guard. It should be avowed that Madame de La Fayette had no great liking for him, for at her house in the Rue de Lille, where she played the hostess to perfection, she had frequently received him very icily, whereas she had extended a very warm welcome to Repub-

licans of a "finer water" who were to be met with there in their swarms. The vulgar habits of the American displeased her; she considered absurd his conduct in his love affair with Madame de Beaumont, but especially she could not forgive this remarkably intelligent and sure-minded individual for not constantly applauding her husband for whom she "held the highest opinion, with whom she was leagued in heart and soul, and who seemed to her mind incomparable." Morris, more moderate and of a calmer nature and sounder judgment than La Fayette, did not consider him a fit controller of events "which he held the reins of" and did not share the self-confidence of this General, "who wished to appear as an Atlas supporting both the Old and the New Worlds." Despite his criticisms, frequently crudely expressed, Madame de La Fayette knew Morris to be an old and real friend, perspicacious but very certain.

At such a difficult time the help he offered might not be rejected lightly. At Paris he had interviewed the Duc and Duchesse d'Ayen and the Vicomtesse de Noailles, and planned with them, for the prisoner's rescuing, the idea of drawing up a petition which Madame de La Fayette should send to the King of Prussia. Together with Roland's reply, Monsieur Beauchet brought the rough draft of this petition to Chavaniac. It was declamatory, of excessive humility, but with extremely clever. "He, in whose favour I implore Your Majesty's pity, is a stranger to crime." Madame de La Fayette was to write "I may

perhaps be prejudiced in favour of a beloved husband, but I cannot be wrong in thinking that Your Majesty will give heed to the prayer of an unhappy woman."

To the rough draft of the letter was attached a note from Morris, in which the wily diplomat, who was acquainted with the susceptibilities of monarchs and knew how to profit by their weaknesses, recommended that Madame de La Fayette should be careful to enumerate all the titles of the King of Prussia in their proper place, and also advised her to have the petition presented to him by his "favourite."

Madame de La Fayette, knowing that her husband, whose "every preference was for the Republic," would hardly be pleased when he learned that even to effect his release his wife had "knelt in supplication before Royalty," and considering that the step proposed to her was unworthy of her, would neither consent to humble herself before a king, nor, above all, to solicit a favour of a courtesan. She wrote a simple letter in which she spoke merely of her loyalty and that of her husband, a quality to which Frederick II's successor then had pretensions.

With wonderful patience she bore the painful uncertainty of her position, being without news of La Fayette, save that in November the newspapers had announced his transfer to Wesel instead of Spandau, but that was all. She knew not what hardships he was undergoing, whether he were cold or hungry, nor whether he were safe and

sound, but in her distress and the absolute helplessness that degraded her in her own eyes, Madame de La Fayette forced herself to keep up courage and shunned no attempt nor neglected any means of being of service to the prisoner. Through the medium of the War Minister she sent an open letter to the Duke of Brunswick, in which she begged the Commander of the Allied Armies to send her news of her husband; and Klopstock, the fiery German poet, having mentioned La Fayette's name with kindness in an article, she besought him to intercede in the General's favour. To Lucchesini, Prussian Minister at Vienna, who wielded great influence through his intimacy with Frederick II, she addressed a letter imploring his help for her husband; and dispatched two Italians, who were working at Chavaniac, with an entreaty addressed to the Princess of Orange, sister of the King of Prussia, who was the only one to deign to reply. The letter was polite, expressed good will, and without giving any definite hopes, rekindled those of Madame de La Fayette, and really did her good.

At the same time, Roland, true to his promise, succeeded in August in persuading the Committee of General Security to rescind the order for the Marquise's arrest; but the freedom she was to enjoy was illusory, for there still remained the supervision to which *ci-devant* nobility were subjected, and Madame de La Fayette could not leave the Department of the Haute-Loire without a permit which would certainly have been refused her. Still, released from her parole, she buoyed

up her hopes and strove hard to free herself from the bonds which still held her.

The first use she made of her new freedom was to go to Puy to look into very material interests. Her husband's affairs were in great disorder, for the General possessing all the contempt of the great noble for money, his ambition to make a noise in the world by going to America at his own expense, and his passion for popularity in France, where his greatest aim was to see his name at the head of the Revolution, had led him into spending a large portion of his capital. Moved by the "divine madness" of the moment, he had thrown away money by handfuls with great levity in the cause he had espoused, and putting, as he said, his country before himself, he had first relinquished the pension the King had granted him after his father's death at the Battle of Minden and then, with a disinterestedness that brought him no credit, refused all the remunerations and gifts offered him. Thus, out of the 146,000 Livres income he possessed in 1777 drawn mainly from the heritage left him by Monsieur de la Rivière, his maternal grandfather, there now remained to him, in 1792, but 80,000 Livres. Again, the greater part of this income was derived from property which had been seized by a decree of August 20th, thus throwing Madame de La Fayette into a state of penury. There were even large sums of money owing, thanks to roguery and thefts, to servants and others who had rendered services to the family. The Marquise, considering her husband's honour and

her own called into question, threw herself wholeheartedly into the duty of paying off her debts and ensuring her children's future. She found her work not only not unworthy of her but meritorious and necessary, and persevering in her task, entered into discussions with men of law, displaying great subtlety, eloquence, and commonsense. She found herself with the choice of trying either to save the whole of her fortune or to have a part of it restored to her by law, and she attempted both plans at once. Going to Puy, she incessantly protested against the injustice in applying, in the General's case, who was a prisoner in the hands of the enemies of France, the laws applying to the *émigrés*, and persistently pleaded the raising of the sequestration, whilst at the same time and with her consent a lawyer friend of hers, Monsieur de Marthory, pointed out the justice of her demands in accordance with the laws themselves. He appeared to admit, in opposition to Madame de La Fayette's opinion, that the General might be considered in the light of an *émigré*, but in that case he asked for an application of the decree of September 2, 1792, by which the "wives or children, fathers or mothers," of *émigrés*, were entitled to one-quarter of the confiscated property and their creditors to payment in full of their accounts. He asked, therefore, that the property situated in the Haute-Loire should be withdrawn from the sale in order to comply with the terms allowed to his client by her marriage settlement, that La Fayette's children should be put in possession of the income due to

them and that his debts should be paid out of the property forfeited.

The Administration at Puy were, it appears, fairly well disposed towards her now, fear alone preventing them from pronouncing a decision, and not knowing which way to turn, they temporized, which was to the Marquise's benefit, to whom at that moment, when days were worth years, gaining time meant victory. All was thus running smoothly for her, when Roland, worn out and exasperated, handed in his resignation as Minister of the Interior. This was a sad blow for Madame de La Fayette, who wished her affairs to still be dealt with in the Haute-Loire, as Roland had promised her. Garat, the new Minister, won over to Jacobinism, decided against her, and she therefore had to renounce her plans and content herself with merely entering her claims.

Of La Fayette there was as yet no news, save that at the beginning of January he had been transported with other prisoners from Wesel to Magdeburg. The Marquise, try as she would, had neither been able to send nor receive from him a single line. All her plans had failed. Washington had not replied ; Morris was powerless ; George, who at one moment had hoped to sail from Bordeaux to England, had been obliged to take refuge in Normandy, and finding himself unable to leave France, had returned to Chavaniac, where his mother had welcomed him with a mixture of sorrow and joy. The de Noailles no longer wrote from Paris with a " punctuality that nothing

could disturb"; and the Duchesse d'Ayen, in order not to abandon the aged invalid, Marshal de Noailles, had had to relinquish her idea of coming and joining her daughter in Auvergne. The only pleasure remaining to the Marquise was that of seeing her children round her, and she interested herself in all that affected them, even in their amusements; but if Anastasie, despite her youth, brought her some consolation, and on occasions, as though ashamed of playing, came to her for long conversations, George and Virginie were not of an age to understand their mother's sorrow and her constant anxiety. As for Madame de Chavaniac, the vehemence of her political opinions prevented her niece from deriving any benefit from her company, and the good soul, moreover, being entirely absorbed in the mechanical daily round of old folk, wished for nothing better than to remain in total ignorance of what was happening outside her own circle and snapped her fingers at the revolutionaries whose overthrow she daily awaited. In moments of excitement she would bang her head against the wall and tear off her bonnet and talk of resisting till death—which she would have done with all the pleasure in the world—but could advise nothing. Hence, in spite of the "filial sentiment" Madame de La Fayette had vowed to her, there existed a certain amount of restraint between the two women and, as it were, a set relationship.

Moreover, living shut away in solitude as she did, suspected and more than once ill-treated, the

Marquise had cut herself off from everything appertaining to the ci-devant nobility, preferring the company of plebeians. Such conduct was not likely to be pleasing to Madame de Chavaniac, for being related to the old noble families, she had had daily intercourse with the families of Boissieu, Barentin, Bouillé—who had fled the country—Nicolai, Saint-Just, and all the gentlefolk of the neighbourhood who had remained behind but took very good care not to call on the wife of La Fayette. It thus followed that apart from the local villagers, servants, Durif the Curé and the Sisters from the Convent, no one came to Chavaniac, where the days dragged out in dreadful monotony, for winters are apt to be very rigorous in those mountain districts of Auvergne. Sometimes heavy falls of snow would completely block up the entrances of the Château, imprisoning the inmates; sometimes when a sharp north-easter was blowing the countryside would seem frozen to death or else heavy rain by flooding the roads and shortening the hours of daylight would bring down upon the household a premature and dungeon-like darkness. Whenever the weather permitted of his so doing, Michel, the porter, went off to fetch the mails and return with bad news. The Jacobins were now in power at Brioude, and the Committee of Control was composed of such hotheads as Gauchier, Chauliat, and Cléremboust, or of still more dangerous traitors like Salveton or Talayrat, son of the former sub-delegate of the Intendance. At Puy a worse state of affairs reigned, for half

the shops were closed and fear had caused a migration of the inhabitants of the once busy little town; whilst such was the state of misery in the country districts that the exasperated peasantry were ready to let themselves be lured into committing the worst forms of violence. The newspapers, whilst relating current events at Paris and fermenting popular opinion against the Aristocrats, attacked the King, who had just been summoned to the Bar of the Assembly, without any rancour, and certainly nobody expected Louis XVI to be condemned to death, and his execution on January 21st was received in the provinces with genuine stupefaction.

It is difficult to accurately fathom other people's mentality, but one may go so far as to surmise that there must have been a particularly nasty moment of remorse for Madame de La Fayette when the Past flashed before her as the unfortunate woman stood before the King's bust that still adorned the salon at Chavaniac. Brought up in respect and love for the Monarchy, she had already seemed half-demented in 1790 on learning of the arrest of the Royal Family at Varenne, for her husband had brought that about to a certain extent, and, in any case, he it was who had command of the troops who had brought back the humiliated King to Paris after his odious Calvary. That she, like her husband, was therefore a participator must have been her thought, for those men, Vergniaud the Girondin, Desmoulins the lawyer, Hérault, Danton, and Robespierre, who, through

fear or premeditation, had voted the King's death, had one and all been welcome guests at her house in the Rue de Lille. La Fayette had been one of them, whilst she herself had taken part in their civic festivals, received their homage, and gratefully acknowledged their compliments. Various couplets were sung at the numerous fêtes where Madame de La Fayette had been present, such as the following :

Grace, Humanity, and Sweetness,
Typify her very Soul.

Spring followed the cold of winter, and the Earth—whose fruits, it was now being said, would in future belong to everyone in common—reawoke to life under the mellow influence of the first fine days, whilst men, on the other hand, were passing laws of death. The Girondins having been defeated and expelled from the Assembly, Robespierre triumphant asked for powers against the accomplices of the foreigner, and Danton caused the Revolutionary Tribunal to be set up. Commissaries were dispatched into the Departments, the greater part of whom had tried to revolt, under the pretext of recruiting for the Army, but in reality to investigate about suspected persons. Lacoste, a former Court Registrar, a rough and ready type of mountain-bred peasant about forty years of age, who had been raised by the Revolution to a position far exceeding his wildest dreams, had, together with Baudot, been chosen as the special infliction for the Haute-Loire. Like all his colleagues, he had

been invited to become a proconsul, and as such, having given his vote for the King's death and all the other iniquitous laws of the moment, he was on the way to establishing himself. The worst of it was that, having an exceedingly high opinion of himself, he thrust that opinion upon everyone in pompous speeches of premeditated cruelty. In reality, he was better thought of than he meant to be, and, moreover, passed as "incorruptible"; but, desiring to be up to date as a writer, he had no sooner reached Puy than he handed out a pamphlet of his own composition, wherein the Girondins and La Fayette, bracketed together for some obscure reason, were treated with prolixity as traitors and bribe-acceptors. Lacoste, besides, concealed from no one that he intended to have the wife and children of the "infamous" General arrested, and since he made no secret of the announcement while passing through d'Aurat, details were brought without delay to Chavaniac, whence Madame de La Fayette, without awaiting their confirmation, immediately left for Puy and demanded an interview with that terrible representative.

She was received with a kindness that astonished her, and as it seemed to be mainly a question of arresting the *ci-devant* nobles implicated without exception in Dumouriez's treason, she remarked that "whereas she was willing and anxious to go bail for La Fayette, she would by no means do so, in any respect, for his enemies."

"Such sentiments are worthy of you," said the representative.

“I am not vastly concerned as to whether they are worthy of me. I am only endeavouring to see if they are worthy of him.”

She referred, of course, to La Fayette, whom Lacoste had attacked; and the latter, won over by some charm of hers, could only reply to her in honeyed speech, and promise the Marquise that she should not be disturbed.

Madame de La Fayette, reassured on her fate and that of her children, who once more owed their freedom to her courage, returned to Chavaniac, where fresh anxieties awaited her. For some months she had had no income coming to her and, despite economies, had used up all the money she had by her. Madame de Chavaniac, although her capital was merged in her nephew's, had a goodly sum in savings, but since she either would not discuss them or refused to touch them, Madame de La Fayette was obliged to make up her mind to borrow. In this she encountered difficulties, since most of her friends and relatives had either left France or were in the same parlous state as herself, and there only remained Gouverneur Morris who might come to her assistance, and to whom she must have no hesitation in applying. He replied in the most generous way that he would furnish the necessary sums, adding with delicacy that he ran no risks whatever, since if circumstances caused him to lose the amount he advanced, he knew the American Nation would reimburse him. He had already given an order to a banker of Amsterdam to put 10,000 florins at La Fayette's disposal and

forwarded 100,000 Livres to Chavaniac, where the daughters of the house, who had charmed Morris the first time he had attended a reception at their mother's by singing to him a romance she had composed, owed their salvation from death by starvation to this blunt but kindly friend. Part of the money was devoted to the daily housekeeping, which was carried on with rigid economy, the other to paying creditors whose claims had not been allowed, and this permitted Madame de La Fayette, freed from the ties imposed on her by Honour and Probity, to dream again of leaving France to join her husband.

This idea, which had relentlessly obsessed her for months became almost irresistible when La Fayette's first letter reached Chavaniac, for Madame d'Hénin, a refugee in England, had discovered, through the intermediary of Mr. Pinkney, the United States Ambassador at London, a means of secretly corresponding with the prisoner, and forwarded to Madame de La Fayette the long reply she had received, but which, dated from his cell in Magdeburg on March 15th, only reached Chavaniac in May.

"I am still alive," wrote La Fayette, and those few words, difficultly scrawled with a toothpick, had, whilst removing her forebodings, brought some measure of comfort to the Marquise, if the letter had not contained indubitable and soul-wrecking details of the sufferings he was undergoing. Whilst she had been complaining of a few visits from the Authorities, that she found life dull

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and comfortless amongst her sealed-up belongings in the deserted and partly restored Château, her husband was buried away in a damp and dismal cell, three paces broad by five and a half long. The walls were damp and chilly ; four doors, provided with padlocks and iron bars, guarded the entrance, and the only window, facing north and looking into the courtyard of the fortress but placed too high up to give sight, only admitted a very meagre light into that den where the General, without pen, paper, or news, watched day and night by sentries without quitting his cell, had fallen sick of a cough and insomnia, shivering with ague, but determined to keep alive, he assured her, and fretting less about himself than over the fate of those he held dear.

After receiving this letter, which cut her like a knife-thrust in an old wound, she thought of nothing but of getting away, but was faced with the difficulty of leaving France. The once kindly peasantry were now becoming hostile, and there was all to fear at a moment when betrayal was a proof of good citizenship ; and even were the plucky woman to reach the frontier without being stopped, a feat that seemed well-nigh impossible, she trembled to think what might become of her children, her aunt, and the servants who must stay behind. The better plan seemed to be to wait and, whilst valiantly holding out against the violent desire that assailed her, not to attempt an enterprise that might prove fruitless and would certainly be dangerous for all concerned. It seemed also that

events were preparing that might allow her to carry out her schemes without laying those she loved open to reprisals on the part of the Revolutionaries. Lyons was in revolt, there was extreme unrest at Marseilles, whilst Avignon and the Dauphiné seemed ready to make a move against the Convention. Joy, hope, and faith all returned at once, and fears were banished in the light of an early deliverance; but, alas! communications were soon cut between the insurgents. Carteaux seized Marseilles, Fréron and Barras were before Toulon, and Representatives were about to stifle the dying embers of Federalism in a terrible way in besieged and half-starved Lyons.

These victories strengthened the already formidable power of the Convention, and the people, cowed by fear, exaggerated proofs of their patriotism by everywhere organizing popular societies and creating committees of supervision. Dwellings were raided, properties sold, persons thrown into prison, and every one was spied upon and liable to betrayal. At Brioude a Revolutionary Tribunal sat with the Jacobin Bonnet as its president, the Clarisses Convent and Saint-Maurice College were full of prisoners, whilst throughout the whole Department churches were closed, bells no longer rang, and whosoever dared celebrate Sunday and the day of rest was suspect. When Durif, the Curé of Chavaniac, was arrested and the little church closed, Madame de La Fayette, who, in former days at Paris at a time when her husband's popularity made her sought after and she received all the Revolutionaries at her house, made one sole

exception of Gobel, the apostate bishop, found the claims of religion too strong upon her to remain inactive. She knew Durif, who was a native of Chavaniac, had received him at the Château and esteemed him for his innate piety, and made use of all she possessed of cleverness and energy to save him, to such good purpose that he appeared before a jury of d'Aurat peasants, who acquitted him. She had exposed herself for the priest's sake, but since he was compelled to relinquish his parish, she was unwilling that the faithful ones should, on account of his departure, be separated from their God, and therefore gathered together the countrywomen at the Château on every real Sunday to recite Mass to them. These pious assemblies she refused to renounce although they were the object of several denunciations, and there was much talk of her fanaticism. Buoyed up by her courageous soul and her simple faith, she would open her familiar Book of Psalms when she found things too much for her or felt herself weakening, and the adjurations she read with such devotion brought a perceptible easing to her troubles, surrounded her with tenderness, comforted her heart, gave her strength to submit and grace to continue to hope.

Almost every day that dawned brought with it some fresh cause for sorrow, but once, however, in the month of June, the postman, to gladden their hearts, brought a letter from La Fayette, who had been allowed, at Mr. Pinkney's request, to assure his folk that he was still alive. His letter, written under the supervision of the officer commanding

the Magdeburg prison, was short and insignificant, and the prisoner still spoke of the trouble in his chest and complained of neither being able to breathe nor walk in his narrow den. He was aware that his family was at Chavaniac and recalled the happy hours he had spent in the Château where he had been born ; but he was unaware that all was under sequestration, that his estates, meadows, vineyards, and farms were about to be sold.

The sale began in the month of August when Siaughes, Camilhac, Vissac, and the Fargettes were put up to auction. The peasants, until then friendly enough, had now no thought but how to enrich themselves at the expense of their former masters. Madame de Chavaniac, prompted by the singular love she bore for La Fayette, and with the excellent inspiration of not desiring to disinterest her nephew's creditors, had long considered the possibility of saving for him the estates he owned in Auvergne. She followed the sales keenly, trying by promises to keep prices down, and with the aid of the small fortune that remained to her repurchased Camilhac for 56,000 Fargettes for 60,000, and Vissac for 102,000 Livres. She gave up all she possessed, ruined herself in fact, so much so that when, a few months later, the family mansion at Brioude was knocked down to the highest bidder at 26,000 Livres, she was unable to make an offer for it.

Events followed in quick succession. On September 5th the Terror became the order of the day, and on the 17th the Convention passed the

terrible law against suspects. Lacoste, considered too indulgent, was succeeded in the Haute-Loire by a new proconsul, well-known in the neighbourhood of which he was a native and where he owned a château—Bonassous—whose name, before the troublous times had come, he had been pleased to add to his somewhat plebeian one of Reynaud. He had also altered his Christian name, and, repudiating the patronage of a *ci-devant* saint who might compromise him, no longer called himself Benoit but Solon. This Solon Reynaud, destined to end his days in the service of the Empire, was, for the moment, given over whole-heartedly to the tyranny of the committees, for seeing power to be exploited in the Revolution, he did not lose his head, but, more cunning than fanatical, legislated or rather administered with calculated cruelty. From August 28th he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the *béates*, poor village women, rather ridiculous but quite harmless, who spent their time in churches, demanded the execution of all suspects, created fresh Committees of Supervision whom he animated with his hatred and encouraged denunciations. Priesthood and nobility were to discover no more active and clear-sighted enemy. He even went so far as to cause the arrest of “foresworn” priests who were very numerous in the country, ordered the destruction of papers steeped in feudalism, the demolition of fortified châteaux, and installed the Cult of Reason. He ordered the destruction of the Black Virgin which had been an object of veneration for centuries in

the ancient Cathedral at Puy, and came to Brioude to bow the head before the Goddesses Louise Bretagne and Jeanne Grotte, who, seated on the altar, defamed the fair church of Saint-Julian, whose sombre and melancholy groined arches were so proper for meditation and prayer.

Previous to the Revolution, Reynaud's family had been wealthy and pious, and doubtless it was Fear that drove that Representative to dishonour churches where his forebears had knelt in prayer, or maybe he thought his impiety would count to him as patriotism, but it was pure envy that inspired his hatred for the nobility. He held up against them his lack of caste through birth, and waxed fierce against all those who had held social rank in his native land that he would never have been able to attain to himself. He thus told anyone he could find to listen to him, that if La Fayette had not been away, he would have had his heart torn out, that the Marquise was the de Noailles pride personified, and her children snakes that the Republic was hugging to its bosom. His words were faithfully carried back to Madame de La Fayette, who was now frequently receiving anonymous letters; whilst from time to time her servants would inform her that the Château was about to be plundered and its inmates slaughtered. Desolation was abroad in the country. Ci-devant nobles, aristocrats, and even worthy patriots who had shielded the General's family were being arrested.

At Chavaniac the days dragged on in dreadful uncertainty of what the morrow would bring forth,

and in the near approach of Tragedy, but Madame de La Fayette opposed her fears with serene courage, exhorting every one to patience, and repeating that hope must be maintained and God's will bowed to. She was averse to no measure however perilous, and went to d'Aurat and Brioude to obtain certificates of citizenship for the inhabitants of the Château.

On November 12, 1793 (21st Brumaire), came a member of the Revolutionary Committee to Chavaniac for the inspection of all papers. Seals were broken, drawers ransacked and all their contents, as well as busts of the King and of Mirabeau, were packed in a cart and taken away in order to make a bonfire to dance around. At the same time Madame de La Fayette received a sure warning that she would be arrested the following day, but she succeeded in keeping this news quiet till the morning. The day was spent in an agony of expectation, but at last, about five o'clock, Monsieur Granchier, Commissary of the Revolutionary Committee, arrived with a detachment of the National Guard from Paulhaguet. Every one was gathered together, as before, in the Marquise's room, but this time the soldiers neither sang nor demanded wine, placing themselves instead on guard at the doors and carrying out their mission in complete silence.

Monsieur Granchier read the order for arrest which affected Madame de La Fayette alone.

"Citizen," asked Anastasie, "are daughters prevented from accompanying their mothers?"

“Yes, Mademoiselle.”

Stating that she was sixteen years of age, she insisted that the warrant affected her as well, but the Commissary refused her request although appearing softened. To conceal his emotion, he told of arrests he had made in the neighbourhood, and finally permitted the Marquise to spend another night at Chavaniac, not without first having extracted her promise to present herself at nine o'clock the following morning at the church at d'Aurat, where all the ladies were held prisoners.

The departure from d'Aurat was made amidst the cries of children torn from their parents and the consternation of those left behind. The Marquise de La Fayette was brought to Brioude with the other women, and with them confined in the old Doradour Mansion. This old manor-house that had been used as a prison for some months was pretty spacious, but the suspects were so numerous that they were packed like sardines—bourgeois, peasants, and nobility being all mixed up together. The “aristocratic ladies” with whom “the La Fayette woman” had had no slightest connection since the Revolution displayed great impertinence towards her. Although she sensed hatred in them, and knew that she was being defamed to the other women, she felt that no useful object would be attained either in discussing the matter or in defending herself, so she contented herself with merely avoiding possible conflict and refraining from taking either side. Settling herself in a room that served as a passage where three

middle-class Brioude women had already established themselves, she cooked and cared for some invalids and made friends with a very pious baker's wife, who with her prayed for the prisoners, and many times settled disputes between ladies of different social rank shut up there. She was a great help to them all.

During her stay there she was able without a break to correspond with her children, who every week sent her some linen and slipped a note into the parcel. A little girl, too, whose business it was to bring the dinners to the House of Confinement, succeeded from time to time, despite insults and blows, in seeing the prisoner, news of whom she brought back to Chavaniac. In the month of January, learning that one of the gaolers might be bought, Anastasie and Virginie, accompanied by Monsieur Frestel, came each in turn to see their mother in the prison, where Anastasie even managed to spend a night.

It gave the girls great pleasure to go to Brioude, and when any obstacle cropped up they were very upset; but these very happy visits always ended painfully, and each time the prisoner saw confirmation of the terrible news that was being whispered around the prison, for her pressing questions could not for ever go unanswered.

The Terror was redoubling in intensity at Paris, where Philippe-Egalité had been sentenced to death, and Barnave, Duport, Kersaint, all the constitutional supporters and the political friends of La Fayette, had been guillotined, and it might well

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be a matter for rejoicing now that the great General was out of France, in a "Prussian Bastille." The Revolutionary Tribunal was sending to the block a weird blending of great lords, girls, nuns, and deputies. Hébert had been executed on March 24th, and Danton on April 5th; whilst at Nantes, Bordeaux, Arras, and Lyons one massacre followed another, and everywhere butchery was in vogue. The family of de Noailles had not been spared, and it was with a spasm of fear that Madame de La Fayette learned that her mother—the Duchesse d'Ayen—her old grandmother, and her elder sister—the Vicomtesse de Noailles—confined at first at their mansion after the death of the old Duc de Noailles, and then concealed in a small house, had just been arrested and imprisoned in the Luxembourg.

Anxiety for what might become of her relatives absorbed all Madame de La Fayette's thoughts, so that she scarcely worried over her own situation. Furthermore, she considered that as there was no possibility of deliverance for her, her best plan was to seek to obviate the thoughts of others from her. Indeed it almost seemed as though she had been overlooked in the Doradour Mansion, where her sweetness of nature had earned for her more consideration than was meted out to the other prisoners, but Solon Reynaud was watching. Though recalled to Paris on the 24th Brumaire, a few days after the Marquise's arrest, he had postponed his departure, offering what he still had to do as a plea to the Convention and for several months

continued his evil course, finally leaving the Department on the 24th Germinal. He had been replaced by Guyardin, who concealed the shyness of his character behind a mask of firmness and in token of his republican simplicity, wore a wooden fork and spoon in his buttonhole. Probably Guyardin would have feigned ignorance that La Fayette's wife was imprisoned at Brioude, but Solon Reynaud denounced her to the Committee of General Security, and having unearthed papers in which were laid out the efforts she had made to save the Curé of Chavaniac from the guillotine, he obtained without much difficulty an order to have her brought to the prison of the Petite Force at Paris.

This order reached Brioude on the 8th Prairial. By a fortunate chance the Captain of Gendarmerie charged with the transfer, being a brother of the lawyer who defended Madame de La Fayette's cause before the Directorate of the Department, obtained a delay and offered to accompany the Marquise by taking post so as to save her from being borne in a cart from brigade to brigade as had been ordered. Guyardin, the Representative, agreed to the proposal, which forestalled any attempt at evasion, but Anastasie, at an interview she had great difficulty in obtaining, having requested permission to accompany her mother, he refused, larding his reply with extremely coarse jests ; and the girl, who had made the journey to Puy especially to see him, had no time to get back to Brioude and embrace her mother before her departure.

The Marquise had been transferred from the Doradour Mansion to the criminal prison, and there it was that her younger daughter and her son went to see her. She was alone in a horrible room with handcuffs lying on the floor near the miserable pallet on which she had flung herself to get a little rest. After giving George and Virginie several messages for Madame de Chavaniac, she made them kneel down, and with them, as it was Pentecost week, recited aloud the words of the "Come, Holy Spirit."

They were still at prayer when the Captain of Gendarmerie knocked at the door, for midday, the time fixed for the departure, had sounded. Madame de La Fayette made her children promise, in the event of her death, that they would neglect no means of trying to rejoin their father. Misfortune rendered them sensible that day, and, restraining their tears, they tore themselves from their mother's arms when she descended into the courtyard and got into the carriage, walking as though going to her death, her lips still murmuring that comforting prayer :

"Veni sancte spiritus . . . veni lumen cordium . . . da tuis fidelibus, salutis exitium . . ."

III

SOMETIME AFTER DARKNESS had fallen on the evening of the 7th Messidor, a convoy of prisoners emerged from the prison of the Petite Force, and making its way through a labyrinth of gloomy streets and over both branches of the Seine, came to the Rue Jacques. The gendarmes of the escort bore torches whose wavering flames as the road wound cast patches of light or shadow on the faces of the women packed in the carts. The road sloped steeply between the Chapel of Saint-Yves, which had just been allocated to a paper merchant, on the one hand, and the colonnaded front of the Church of Saint-Benoit, known as the "Shapely." When level with the Mathurins Monastery, abandoned now by the monks who had prayed there since 1228 for the deliverance of those in captivity, the caravan drew up, and the cab that headed it entered under the massive archway of the old du Plessis College, that for some months had borne the name of the Equality House of Detention.

Followed carts and gendarmes clattering through the gateway to draw up in the courtyard, and from the cab there emerged two ancient dames with bent backs and tottering steps, one of them being Madame de Réaulx, a lady of eighty-four, and the

other, Madame de Machaut, also an octogenarian. The other women got out of the carts and were conducted by the gendarmes to a freshly painted hall, where they sat down awaiting their turns. One by one, they were summoned into the lodge of the porter, a still youthful man but of pinched and sinister expression, where he inscribed their names in the register, briskly searched his new lodgers, and led them by a steep and unrailed iron staircase to cells already occupied by other prisoners who, at that late hour, were tucked away in small metal bedsteads touching each other.

Amongst the women who had thus just been transferred from the Force Prison to the Plessis was Madame de La Fayette, who had left Brioude on the 10th Prairial; and after a somewhat painful and tedious journey through a highly excited population had reached Paris on the eve of the day when the Festival of the Supreme Being was wont to be celebrated. Gaiety was depicted on the faces of a vast crowd that thronged the streets, songs repeated in chorus resounded from the squares, and, indeed, no one would have dreamed that the terrible law of Prairial had just been carried, and that on the Place de La Revolution the scythe of the guillotine daily reaped a larger crop of victims. Madame de La Fayette was at first shut up in the Petite Force, a gloomy prison notorious for the blood that had been spilled on its stones two years before, and her stay there was dreadful, for she had to look after herself and others and participate in awful scenes; whilst during

the night the porter's dogs bayed continually, warders armed with iron bars rattled on the door-gratings, and there was no end to the uproar and clamour in the section reserved for the "ladies of the streets." The Marquise had no hopes whatsoever to fall back upon, but she certainly could not have been in fear of her life, since she saw no one being taken away to the scaffold and was in utter ignorance of what was going on in Paris, where a terror had arisen within the Terror. The fact was that suspects whom their birth, wealth, or political opinions doomed to execution were not brought to the Force but mainly to the Conciergerie, the Luxembourg, or the Plessis.

She was, moreover, ignorant that the Plessis—"Fouquier's Shop," as it was called—was especially reserved for the Revolutionary Tribunal, when she was transferred there by order of the Police Administration of the Commune of Paris. On the night of her arrival she stayed in a room where four persons were already sleeping, and despite the profound silence the horror of such promiscuity could have no other effect on the poor woman than to keep her awake. At eight o'clock in the morning a warder, doubtless one Bourcier, on duty in the Corridor of the Graces, came to unbolt the doors, and Madame de La Fayette then learned that 1,700 prisoners of all ranks, ages, and sexes were incarcerated in the one-time school, which, together with the College of Louis-le-Grand, formed the vastest and most densely populated "House of Justice" in Europe. To right, to left,

above and in front of her nothing but cells were to be seen, all either new or in the course of repair ; for in that year, 1794, over 80,000 francs had been expended by the orders of Citizen Hubert, Inspector-General of Works for the Republic, in transforming the two colleges into prisons. Memoranda of masons, carpenters, joiners, and others were packed away in files, and although they were not paid, their accounts ran into big figures. One Durand, for instance, provided bars to the value of 65,000 Livres ; another, Motard, furnished 8,486 Livres' worth of cast-iron for grills which were fitted to all windows from top to bottom, as well as fenders to prevent letters from being thrown out. The effect of this on the outside of the buildings was depressing ; whilst on the inside, corridors, entrances, and part of the cells had just been whitewashed, the floors were still covered with plaster, the courtyard was encumbered with building materials, and to make matters infinitely worse, Haly, the porter, had through negligence allowed refuse and filth to accumulate there.

It was in this unspeakably filthy courtyard, enclosed on every side by blank walls and exposed all day long to the sun's rays, that the prisoners took their exercise, coming and going, backwards and forwards, like a flock of penned sheep, amidst the ordure and the dust, in a tropical heat. There was only shade in the evening, about the time that the prisoners were compelled to go up to their gloomy dens. Men and women were taken to the courtyard at different times ; and the women, while

inhaling the fœtid atmosphere, could see through the gratings of their cells upturned faces congested by a pitiless sun, and the stare of eyes filled with either sorrow, revolt, or animalism.

During the course of her exercise, Madame de La Fayette recognized amongst her companions in bondage, mingled with girls who "displayed indecent signs of their debauchedness," several persons she had met in society: Mesdames de Courteilles, de Rochechouart, de Richelieu, the "amiable witty and kindly" Marquise de Wassy, Sophie de Magny, Nathalie de Laborde, the beautiful Madame de Barbentane, Mademoiselle de Pons, and her mother. She had a pleasant and at the same time sad surprise to find there her cousin and close kinswoman, Madame de Duras. Daughter of the Marshal and the Marquise de Mouchy, Henriette de Noailles had, in 1760, married Emmanuel de Durfort, Duc de Duras, who had escaped to London. Her brother was that Vicomte de Noailles who was married to the favourite sister of Madame de La Fayette, and was very friendly with the *ci-devant* Marquis; but Madame de Duras, formerly a Maid of Honour to Marie-Antoinette, had ever marked her disapproval of the advanced ideas of the Vicomte de Noailles and the elegant liberalism of the branch of the family to which the Marquise de La Fayette belonged, so that her aristocratic opinions, whose keenness she made no attempt to conceal, had estranged her from the democratic General's wife, whom she had not seen since the outbreak of the Revolution.

Misfortune reunited these two recluses who at that horrible time made each other a vow of friendship that they faithfully kept ever afterwards. Madame de Duras received Madame de La Fayette in "a touching manner"; and Madame de La Fayette, who would willingly have offered her life to get Madame de Duras out of prison, felt a great relief in having her near her. The two could discuss nothing but the disasters that seemed to have fallen on their family. La Fayette, for fear of compromising her, had ceased writing to his wife, but, thanks to Mesdames d'Hénin and de Maisonneuve, she had learned that the General, who had been "buried" for twenty-two months, had been separated from Maubourg, Lameth, and Bureau de Pusy, and sent to Neisse, four hundred kilometres away from Magdeburg, in a marshy district of Silesia, where he occupied an unhealthy cell, guarded by sentries day and night. Whereas the Duc d'Ayen, the Duc de Duras, and the Vicomte de Noailles had had time to escape, the Marshal and Marquise de Mouchy, as well as the Duchesse de Noailles, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles, were behind the bars. All the nobility remaining in France were in danger, heads were falling like tiles, and the whole country seemed doomed to the scaffold. Yet Madame de La Fayette was ever reassured, judging that the captivity of her mother, who was so kind and charitable, and of her broken-down old grandmother, could not be very prolonged, and that no one would dare to bring before the pitiless Tribunal one like her

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sister, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, whose husband had furnished so many proofs of devotion to the democrats. So far as she personally was concerned, she had never been assailed by any fears, for though she knew that the name she bore was now more detested than it had ever been popular, she asked herself what the Revolutionaries whom she had received and entertained could possibly have against her. She was a patriot and had done nothing but good in her way, and in effect the customary forms of accusation, such as "treating with the enemies of the Republic" or "corrupting morals," could not to any serious extent be levelled against her. What she did not understand was that the Jacobins, ready now to fly at each other's throats, were desirous of eliminating all those who in any way had belonged to their party and whom they detested even more than the aristocrats. She had faith in herself, believing that she would be able to successfully defend her cause as she had so well defended it at Puy-en-Velay, and she was certain, moreover, that "God would defend her and hers."

She was disillusioned by Madame de Duras's words and more by what went on before her eyes. Every evening convoys arrived at the Plessis, loaded carts entered the courtyard, and in the midst of a deathlike silence could be heard the loud clanging of the closing gate. By this means the number of captives increased, and the prison would not have been able to contain them all if Fouquier-Tinville's carriage had not come every

morning to fetch away the day's booty. The ushers of the Public Prosecutor would come into the corridors calling out a number of names. Cell doors were thrown open, the prisoners called had a quarter of an hour to get ready, and the others, anxious to know who had been picked, lined up to escort them and see them pass down the dreaded "Stairway of the Fates." A shake of the hand, a farewell kiss, and nobles and villagers, great ladies and nuns, moved off together. Some held themselves proudly, ready to leave this world ; in the eyes of others were timid looks of fear. Here some women with clasped hands and transfigured faces were gazing heavenward ; there others not fully realizing their situation were letting themselves be led away without a murmur ; whilst yet others were weeping pitifully. Some there were who sang, others who struggled, cursed or complained, but the chosen ones, without distinction of rank or sex, were thrust into the carriages, whilst Fouquier's coachman, smilingly contemptuous in his suit of motley, flicked at them with his whip. The gate screamed on its hinges ; a sob, a last farewell, a curse or a prayer, and the carriages vanished under the dark archway, to halt for a brief instant before the porter's lodge for the checking of names, where Madame Haly, breaking off her work, would gaze through her flower-decked windows with her unnaturally bright eyes at the long procession that passed. . . .

After such events the courtyard resumed its silence and the noise of the gaol ceased for a while

till carelessness or resignation gaining the upper hand, the prisoners freed from their passing stupor began to laugh, play and compose songs and jokes, and life resumed its way, a dreadful life of misery in which the strictness of the regulations would have been more bearable without the bullying of the warders and the fearful condition of the women in the majority of cases. Madame de La Fayette had the privilege of sleeping alone in a garret on the fifth floor, which she had secured on the day following her arrival. Though her cell was so narrow that there was no room to place a chair between the bed and the wall, the Marquise experienced a very keen pleasure in being alone, save that her day seemed interminably long. The gaolers were a set of liars and drunkards, who would molest their charges to get money out of them; and the chief of them all, the wretched and terrible Haly, the Republican porter, who was more despotic on his chair than any Emperor of China on his throne, persecuted his charges and enriched himself at their expense. Everything about him, his dead-white face, sinister expression, and pale lips, was repulsive, and he rarely opened his mouth save to utter a sneer or an insult. The women prisoners of better upbringing he would call "my beauties" and "my little ones," insulting them with coarse jests. His wife was the daughter of one Bault, who had been porter first at the Force and later the Conciergerie. She possessed what was then called a "lily and rose" complexion, delicate features, the sweetest possible mouth and innocent virginal eyes, but she

was utterly heartless and cruel, and assisted her husband in browbeating the prisoners. Grandpré, the inspector, was the only one to mete out humane treatment; and if Haly's brother, the chief caterer for the prison, stole more wine than he sold; if Baptiste, the gaoler, who went about in a semi-nude condition and wore a red bonnet, was more than half a beast, another turnkey, who had once been a footman in the service of Madame de Narbonne, was of a kindly nature, and in his unobtrusive way looked after Mesdames de La Fayette and de Duras.

One of the most painful episodes of the day was meal-time, not that the Marquise had any fault to find with the coarse bread and the bowl of thin soup or the dish of ill-cooked haricots that comprised the daily ration, but only wooden spoons were provided, knives and forks being forbidden; and so the penknife which Madame de Wassy had had the skill to conceal was a source of much gratification to her friends. Even these discomforts might have been bearable if meals had not been served at tables of twelve in the former class-room of rhetoric, for Haly, Junior, purposely mixed up his charges in order to torment them. Thus Mesdames de Courteilles and de Richelieu were seated beside low-class girls, and Mademoiselle de Pons with Mademoiselle Dervieux of the Opera. The tables were clothless, unwashed and evil-smelling, and around them women of the slums coarsely complained of the food, whilst shamelessly conducting themselves and shrieking at each other in the language of the gutter.

This ordeal was still worse during the two hours of exercise in the courtyard. Here ladies of gentle birth were in constant contact with a herd of girls of low degree, a very great number of whom were shut up in the Plessis. Arrested indiscriminately from evening to evening for theft, misdemeanour, or, maybe, murder, they were easily to be recognized by their sly gait. Slum girls, girls from the Rue de Chartres, washerwomen, street-girls, thieves, they all possessed the same grimacing features, the same cunning expression in their eyes and that air of luxury or vice that distinguished them from the other prisoners. Some were well dressed and even smart as their profession required, but the majority wore coarse gowns and socks, were swarming with vermin, and, like the women Pescheux, Pasquet, Vigeon, and many others, they were constantly begging. Impossible to conceive of the dreadful expressions on those low and evil faces, of the laughter more sinister than tears on the lips of those poor wretches. One of them, Saint-Ange, a girl of twenty-three, was an habitual robber from her chance lovers ; Moreau, a colossal giant of a woman who had killed her rival in a brawl with a blow of her fist ; and Mellier, a woman with long, stringy, white hair, imprisoned, grotesquely enough at her age, for corrupting morals. Then there were many sick or dropsical ones, like Christine Pigeot ; some shivering with fever or in the grip of small-pox ; a poor lunatic ; some consumptives ; but the most to be pitied were those who in their anguish saw the hour of their motherhood drawing nigh.

What more harrowing spectacle than that contrast ; on one side, the degraded, contemptible type ; on the other, the woman suffering and dying without anyone to assist her. The prison surgeon, Mor-koski, obliging but unskilled, could be of no help ; whilst Souppé, the health officer of the infirmary, tended only those who could pay him, and admitted them to one of the hospitals where he was on the staff and received a bonus.

In that dreadful Plessis prison, where hope and reason might easily be lost and suicide occur, as it did in the case of one prisoner who threw herself in despair out of a window, Madame de La Fayette was not downhearted. When her strength threatened to fail, she would pray. " I believe in God," she would repeat to herself ; and wrote, " Lord, all of my life is in your hands. Be ever with me and I shall fear nothing ! " She had been allowed an old Latin Psalter, which she studied with respect, meditating on it and relishing it more each day, and in that way found that her loneliness lost much of its horror. Her enforced work kept her busy, and the joys of friendship caused her to forget her captivity. She left the Duchesse de Duras as little as she could, for the latter's room, being bigger than the others, was used as a sort of rendezvous ; and there came Madame de Wassy and her sister Madame de Barbentane, the Comtesse de Bohm, Mesdames de Pons, Sophie de Magny, and the witty and lazy Saint-Haon. Nathalie de Laborde brightened her companions with her cheerful spirits. She carried herself well, had an enchanting face,

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was so frankly gay, and had such a way with her that she might be forgiven for not refusing out of courtesy the couplets that the prisoners vied with each other in making in her honour :

Forgive, Nathalie,
My rash lover's lay,
The rose wakes envy
In the dawn of the day.

Madame de La Fayette, on the contrary, had never become intimate with the "last widow of the last Buffon," a silly idiot thinking of naught but pleasure, nor with that Aglae du Bail, who ogled every one, to the shame of the political prisoners, and justifying the slander from the common law offenders.

It was in the evenings especially that these meetings took place in Madame de Duras's room. It was certainly annoying to be vexed by turnkeys, who came in at any time, and by the porter who patrolled the corridor in a sort of dressing-gown and carrying an enormous bunch of keys, but at that time he had not forbidden lights nor had all the rooms been bolted. When the meeting was to take place, the various ladies were called, candles and lamps were lighted and coffee made, or a little cooking done on stoves. There was a hearth in the room that served as fire and was used to heat all the coffee-pots round it. Mademoiselle de Pons played chess. Nathalie de Laborde laughingly read out the various sonnets she had received ; whilst another sang in low tones. Prayers were recited

together, and a great deal of chattering took place. There were inscriptions on the walls that caused some amusement seeking to decipher, and it would certainly have surprised the young men who had written them—amongst them La Fayette himself, who was brought up at the Plessis College—had they known that their class-rooms would re-echo with complaints and would hold as prisoners women of every class, the majority of whom were destined to become a prey to the guillotine.

Madame de La Fayette compelled herself to banish anxiety by charitable work, and evils to relieve were far from lacking in that gloomy place. Prisoners who had no money were a butt for the barbarity of the monsters who guarded them. They were ill-fed, covered with rags, and packed in stifling cells. The Marquise importuned the porter on their behalf, helped with their work, and aided them as she could. Eighty peasant women from the Vivarais, shut up in Fouquier's Shop for attending Mass, were sustained and comforted by her. One day six poor women speaking different dialects were brought to the Conciergerie, where the youngest gave birth to a baby two hours after her arrival. She was tended by Madame de La Fayette and Madame de Duras, who finally succeeded in getting her a transfer to a hospital, where she soon afterwards expired.

The wings of Death were spread wide over the House of Justice, and numerous were the prisoners who died of smallpox, for almost all were infected. Not even for money could medicine or a cup of

tisane be bought, and it took two days of negotiation to obtain a permit to have the simplest things brought into the prison. Madame de La Fayette spent many nights by the bedside of Madame de Machaut, who recovered, and of Madame de Réaulx, who died.

From time to time the caterer of the Revolutionary Tribunal appeared and a convoy went away. "The idea that one will soon be numbered among the victims renders one more prepared for such sights!" wrote Madame de La Fayette, who did her best to communicate to her friends the serenity she never ceased to display to them; but sometimes, when she was alone in her cell, an appalling weight of gloom would fall on her mind, as she thought of her mother, her grandmother, and her sister lying in the cells of the Luxembourg, and concerning whose fate she was as anxious as she was ignorant.

It was extremely difficult to procure news of any description. The porter only spoke to his charges to annoy them, no one was permitted to enter the prison, and it was very rare that the warders became so bold as to hold conversation with the prisoners. There was, however, a little lane outside that it had been impossible to screen from the prisoners' gaze. The Plessis windows that overlooked it were always occupied, but they were so high up that people below looked like children and their words could only be distinguished when shouted. Possibly it was by this means that Madame Beauchet, the former chambermaid from Chavaniac, who had visited the Force prison several

times, used to communicate with her mistress, or it may be that the Marquise managed to hold a conversation with the obliging Doctor Morkoski, who was tending Madame de Duras. However that may be, it is certain that she knew that La Fayette, handed over by Prussia to the Austrians, who detested him, had been moved from Neisse to the great fortress of Olmütz, where already were imprisoned the former War Minister Bournonville and the four Commissaries of the Convention whom Dumouriez had delivered to the enemy. This heroine of conjugal piety, who always forgot her own troubles even when she was most in danger, since twice she thought they had come to fetch her to the scaffold, did not despair of one day going to share her husband's captivity. The Comtesse de Bohm had lent her a map, with which she amused herself by tracing the route she would follow when free, to go to Olmütz, and reciting by heart the names of the towns and villages she would have to pass through.

Madame de La Fayette had also been able to learn that her children had been overlooked by the authorities at the Château de Chavaniac, which had been repurchased by her aunt with what was indispensable, and that the arrests they had been threatened with had not been carried out. She was without news of Madame de Noailles and Madame d'Ayen, her only comfort and assurance being the efficacy of her prayers, and the knowledge that her gaolers, dumb in the ordinary course of events, never failed through cruelty to inform

the prisoners of the sentences of death meted out by the Revolutionary Tribunal. It was thus, a few days after it had been carried out, that the news reached the Plessis of the sentence condemning Monsieur and Madame de Mouchy to the guillotine. The veteran Marshal of the eighteenth-century wars was eighty-four years old and had retired after a glorious career to his estates at Mouchy, where he had devoted himself to charity. He had been accused of assisting priests and *émigrés*, a ridiculous plea which Fouquier disdained to use against the Marshal's wife, who was condemned without a hearing. Madame de La Fayette undertook to tell their daughter of the death of the Duc and Duchesse de Mouchy and entered Madame de Duras's room, who, surprised to see the downcast look on her friend's face, questioned her anxiously, breathlessly demanding news of her parents. No reply came to reassure her until at last Madame de La Fayette, in tears, had to admit to her that the old Marshal had been executed, but, on seeing her cousin's grief, was filled with such compassion for her and such despair at not being able to find comforting words that she had not the strength to tell her the whole truth, and it was only some hours later that Madame de Duras learned that her mother had been beheaded as well. The Duc de Mouchy had died like a brave man, as though mounting to the attack, insisting on himself warning the Duchesse, who displayed great courage on the scaffold. Amongst other condemned borne on the same carts were the Marquis

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de Guiche, the Comte de Polastron, Monsieur de Saint-Priest, and the Prince de Broglie.

It was the period of the height of the Terror when, in seven weeks, thirteen hundred and seventy-six heads fell in Paris. There were sixty executions on the 10th Messidor, fifty on the 21st, and sixty on the 5th Thermidor. There was scarcely a prisoner without some relative to mourn; and Madame de La Fayette undertook the painful task of telling Madame de Caradeuc that she was widowed, and Mademoiselle de Pons that she had lost her father. At the Plessis there were up to sixty-four warned prisoners per day taken to the Tribunal, but still the cells filled up as fast as they were emptied. One hundred and fourteen prisoners were brought from Neuilly after the decree against the nobles, amongst them the Princesse de Croÿ, sister of Madame de Tourzel; Madame de Richelieu, Madame de Serent, and Madame de Choiseul. They were lodged in cells with fish girls from the markets. Madame de Richelieu, too tired to climb the stairs alone, was being ill-treated by a gaoler, when Madame de La Fayette obtained permission to assist the poor woman. Madame de Choiseul had eaten nothing all day so the Duchesse de Duras made her a *panade*, which proved delicious.

Orders arrived for the imposition of stricter discipline, and Haly ordered all lights to be extinguished first at eight o'clock and then at seven, so that the evening meal had to be groped for in the dark. Doors were bolted for futile reasons, thus depriving the prisoners of the pleasure of being

together, and intercourse rendered so difficult no longer alleviated their troubles. The Plessis became a tomb, and such severities made life there terribly monotonous. Everyone lost hope and prepared for death, but still Madame de La Fayette did not lose her assurance. However, in order to be ready, in case she should be handed over to the executioner, she wished to write to her parents, as it were, for the last time. In her will she wrote : " I forgive my enemies with all my heart . . . my persecutors whoever they be, and even the persecutors of those I love . . ." She protested her fondness for her native land : " A model very dear to my heart (La Fayette) sets me the example of these sentiments." She blessed her children and confided them " to God's hands." Here she broke down, but refused to allow her tears to weaken her will or destroy her hopes. She was too great a believer for her prayers to be barren, ceaselessly implored the divine pity, and never wrote a sentence that did not end with an earnest prayer.

On the evening of the 8th Thermidor, horsemen rode into the courtyard, where the shoes of their mounts rang on the stones. Prisoners, gazing through windows and bars, caught a glimpse of some municipal guards wearing tricolour plumes, who spoke a few words to the porters and warders, and departed as they had come. Whatever their object, they succeeded in thoroughly alarming the male and female prisoners incarcerated in the Plessis. It was rumoured that all the nobility were to die, that a massacre was to be ordered, that pits

had been prepared, vast catacombs capable of holding thirty thousand corpses.

That night was spent as in a trance, for no one in the prison could sleep, and, with the arrival of daylight, fear increased, as it seemed to be justified. Gates were closed ; it was forbidden to descend to the courtyard ; and Haly and his underlings, with haggard eyes and dazed looks, came and went, flustered and gesticulating. Outside, the tocsin was ringing, drums were beating, the streets rang with shouting, and from time to time the roar of cannon could be heard. The prisoners trembled in their cells, expecting anything to happen, and being completely ignorant of what was going on in the world, feared the worst. At last, at the close of a day of unspeakable anguish, a voice was heard uttering a terrible shout. It was Saint-Huruge, who from his cell was announcing Robespierre's fall, and the prisoners might well believe that with Robespierre overcome—Robespierre who seemed the very personification of the Terror and was responsible for all the blood that had been spilled—the end of their captivity and the alleviation of their sufferings was at hand. Most of them felt the strain of many weeks relax and began to clap their hands, but some, fearing the news might be false and that Saint-Huruge might be a decoy, a creature of the police, intending to lure them to self-betrayal, were more cautious. These latter were soon reassured when they learned that Saint-Huruge, who had that day been brought from the Bicêtre to the Plessis, knew that an attack was to

be made on the "Incorruptible," and thus had been able to understand the gestures of neighbours who, mounted on the roofs, were trying to impart the glad news to the prisoners. These worthy folk, renewing their signals of satisfaction, confirmed the happy event, and in the House of Justice, a little while before mute with fear, applause broke out with shouts of joy, whilst a happy and peaceful revolt swept from end to end that not even the gaolers dared attempt to check.

Despite the name she bore, which so many detested, Madame de La Fayette was saved and had escaped the insensate rage of a monster. She owed her deliverance to the mysterious intervention of her American friends, who wished thus to save their country from the shame of allowing the wife of their "liberator" to be sacrificed without any protest. It is not to be doubted that the new Ambassador, Monroe, had secret interviews with the members of the Committees, and also the skilful tactics of Gouverneur Morris saved the Marquise from appearing before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where it would have been impossible to obtain an acquittal.

The cells were thrown open early on the morning of the 10th Thermidor ; rest succeeded alarms, and a feeling of security replaced that of terror. The Plessis was now become nothing more than a big house holding a numerous family. Good meals were the order of the day, and everyone took part at them.

For Madame de La Fayette the days following

the 9th Thermidor were the most painful of her captivity. Her first thought had been to get in touch with her relatives at the Luxembourg, and as she still feared to compromise her loved ones whom she believed to be there, she persuaded Madame de Duras to write the note. Letters were now easier to send, and the reply was not long in coming and was terribly concise. The Duchesse de Noailles, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles—grandmother, mother, and sister of Madame de La Fayette—transferred to the Conciergerie on the 3rd Thermidor, had appeared on the 4th before the Revolutionary Tribunal and been sent to the scaffold the same evening. The Duchesse de Duras tried to keep this dreadful news from her friend, but her tears gave her away. Madame de La Fayette was stunned and could not credit the death of the sister she adored and who seemed to her to unite all the virtues and graces. She reproached herself for not having been more tender to her. She loved her parents so well and had told them so so rarely. No daughter had been more loaded with kindness, no sister more loved than she had been. Such thoughts seared her very soul, and prison became more odious to her than ever. She would have preferred it in its former sinister state, for now the happiness and rejoicing of others hurt her desperately.

Nowadays the prisoners congregated in the courtyard at the same hours, but with a vast difference, for now it was a strange but happy blending of hussars, spies, priests, great ladies, nuns, and

street girls. Everything had assumed a different aspect, and one heard laughter and song, declarations of love and the beginnings of courtships. The Haly couple were still there but changed also, the man's voice flute-like, the woman's honeyed, whilst their attitude was as benevolent as before it had been hostile. They permitted newspapers and did not prevent visitors from entering the prison. One day Madame de La Fayette and Madame de Duras were summoned to the porter's lodge, where they found Alfred and Alexis de Noailles (Alexis became aide-de-camp to Charles X and died in 1835; Alfred de Noailles, Baron of the Empire, perished at the Crossing of the Bérésina), aged ten and eleven, accompanied by Monsieur Grellet, their tutor, waiting to see them. These boys were the children of the Vicomtesse de Noailles, who had been executed on the 4th Thermidor, and thus by their mother nephews of Madame de La Fayette, and by their father of the Duchesse de Duras. Monsieur Grellet related how the de Noailles ladies, whom the Abbé Carrichon had followed to the scaffold, had died. They had been taken to the Luxembourg at nine o'clock on the evening of the 3rd, but having no money they had been unable to get any beds to lie upon, although they were worn out with fatigue. The seventy-seven-year-old Duchesse de Noailles, whose faculties were weakened with age, was so overcome that one of the prisoners, Madame Lavet, got up to give her her bed, whilst the Duchesse d'Ayen and the Vicomtesse de Noailles lay on a

pallet on the ground. After a sleepless night they were brought before the Tribunal, where the Duchesse de Noailles as well as her daughter, the Duchesse d'Ayen, were deaf with panic. The President bade them approach the table to ask their names, but that was all they realized of the proceedings. On the same day, at six o'clock in the evening, they left the Conciergerie for the scaffold. The heat was oppressive and a storm burst during the journey. The Duchesse de Noailles was in the first cart with eight other condemned. Her hands were bound behind her back and she tottered at every bump on the slippery road. Her black taffeta dress was streaming with water, and her bonnet having been blown back by the wind, her grey hair was hanging in long, sodden wisps over her poor terror-stricken face. With wide staring eyes she gazed at the crowd which hurled jokes and insults as she passed. On the second cart, leaning against the rail, was Madame d'Ayen, in a blue and white striped *déshabillé*, with the Vicomtesse de Noailles near her, dressed all in white. Through the Rue de Fourcy and the Rue Antoine passed the convoy, and the Duchesse d'Ayen and her daughter lowered their eyes which till then had been filled with anxiety, for in the crowd whom the storm had not driven away they had caught sight of the Abbé Carrichon, and received from him from afar the absolution they awaited. The rain ceased and the sky cleared as the procession crossed the Antoine Faubourg and halted in the Place du

Trône Renversé. The Duchesse de Noailles was the third to be guillotined, then came six ladies, and Madame d'Ayen was the tenth. She climbed up in an attitude of firm devotion. The executioner seized her, brutally tore off her bonnet which was held by a pin and caused her to utter a cry of pain, but she was so glad to die before her daughter that her face grew calm as she looked at her. The Vicomtesse de Noailles raised her eyes to Heaven and prayed, seeming lit-up with a glow from inside, and looked so fair and youthful in her white dress that there were murmurs of pity from the hostile crowd when her head fell. All was over and the priest who had been present at the execution, trembling at the furies of the guillotine, departed like the Early Christians, when they returned from the gates of the town, covered with the blood of the Martyrs.

The Duchesse de Noailles, née Cossé-Brissac, was seventy-seven years old, the Duchesse d'Ayen, née Daguesseau, fifty-seven, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, née Noailles, thirty-six, at the time of their execution. With them there perished also Madame de la Châtre, the Marquise de 'Talaru, General de Flers, and several others.

Madame de La Fayette made valiant efforts to stem her tears while listening to this tragical recital, for she wanted to know everything. She questioned Monsieur Grellet, making him repeat all he had said and rekindling his sorrow, and found perhaps some relief in hearing him talk of those loved ones she had lost. When the tutor had

taken away his pupils, she remained a long time sunk in melancholy, unable to tolerate anything resembling human comfort, and, as she told her son, to whom she had been given permission to write, the idea of following such beloved footsteps had changed the details of the end to sweetness for her. However, the guillotine had ceased to function, and now the gates of the Plessis were frequently opened, for prisoners were leaving the building every day, and as they approached the wicket, the gaolers would cry out :

“ Liberty ! ”

Words such as this rang pleasantly to the ear, and the heartiest congratulations accompanied the citizens who were freed from their bondage.

The women of the people were the first to leave, and six weeks passed before a noble was set free, but Fouquier-Tinville's carriage came no more, for the Public Prosecutor had now in his turn been shut up in the Conciergerie. Acquittals became more numerous at the Revolutionary Tribunal, and a host of people detained as suspects were set at liberty without trial. Thus it was with the convoy of a hundred and fourteen from Neuilly who left the Plessis at the end of Fructidor what time Lindet made a patriotic appeal at the Bar of the Convention for peace and forgetfulness of the Past. A fortnight later, the Assembly carried an address condemning those who talked about the scaffold, and on the 25th Vendémiaire, Legendre and Bourdon de l'Oise, two deputies sent by them, drove in a carriage to the courtyard of the old

college, where they ordered the liberation of eighty prisoners.

Madame de La Fayette remained in her cell without anyone appearing to be interested in her, whilst Madame de Duras was only visited by an underling of Legendre's, whom she told she was a noble but not an *émigré*.

Two days later the deputies returned and ordered all the political prisoners to be brought to the lodge. On seeing the Marquise de La Fayette and the Duchesse de Duras come in, Bourdon impetuously exclaimed :

"Let the ci-devant nobility be taken outside ! It is not fitting that they should be questioned at the same time as worthy *sans-culottes* !"

A few minutes later, Madame de Duras was recalled and gave her name as Louise-Henriette-Charlotte-Phillipine de Noailles, wife of Emmanuel de Durfort, Duc de Duras.

"What dreadful names," said Bourdon, leaping on his chair, "we shall have to consult the Committee of General Security about this."

However, Haly, the porter, spoke of the meekness of the prisoner ; others said how good and compassionate she had been to them ; and Legendre lowered his voice to affirm to his colleague that he had heard good things of the Citizeness Duras. No decision, however, was reached, and the Duchesse left the room feeling that she had lost the day. Her place was taken by Madame de La Fayette, and now it was Legendre who changed his tone. He was no longer the Thermidorian who had

beaten Robespierre, but the man of June 10th and 20th. He did not question but accused, and sought to humiliate the prisoner. He had reason to complain of her, hating her, her husband, and her very name.

"I shall always stand up for my husband, and, after all, a name is not a sin," replied Madame de La Fayette.

Bourdon, not displeased at her proud attitude, seemed moved and asked numerous questions, but Legendre cut into the interview with vehement interruptions, and ended by ordering the Marquise to retire, treating her as insolent.

At ten o'clock on the morning of the following day, as Madame de Duras was busy cleaning her cell, she heard the door open and Haly, the porter, entered, holding in his hand a large rolled-up document which he handed to the prisoner, saying :

"Here is your passport to liberty !"

Madame de Duras got into a carriage and vanished, after just allowing herself the time to put a few things together, kiss her friend and wish her a speedy delivery. This unforeseen departure, whilst gratifying Madame de La Fayette, could not fail to make her own situation appear still more cruel. Madame de Duras had become her best friend ; they had mingled their tears, combined their hopes, comforted each other many a time in their misery, giving pity for pity, so that their fates seemed linked, and their intimacy made their hateful stay in the Plessis more bearable. Now Madame de La Fayette was alone, and although

a long apprenticeship had rendered her capable of enduring fresh suffering, her loneliness seemed all the more horrible to her. She withdrew from the other prisoners, not being able to stand their laughter, songs, and occasional quarrels, and the boredom of prison life seizing hold on her, she awaited her own liberation with impatience, not dreaming that her captivity might be prolonged. Ambassador Morris came with his wife to see her, and told her that the tide of popular opinion was daily swinging more and more against Carrier of Nantes and all the Jacobins, that the reaction against the Terror was consolidating, and that he thought he would soon be able to obtain for her a deliverance he had long been soliciting.

About that time, the different prisons in Paris were reshuffled, and to the Plessis, which had become the prison reserved for those awaiting judgment, came a large number of prisoners from the Conciergerie that had become uninhabitable on account of infection and ill-drainage. Amongst others, Fouquier-Tinville was transferred to the Plessis at the beginning of Brumaire. One day, some prisoners caught a glimpse of him behind the bars of his cell and he was hissed and insulted. Madame de La Fayette, not being in this category, was removed on the 6th Brumaire to a prison infirmary in the Rue du Chemin-Vert, of which Dr. Escourbiac had been Director before the Revolution, and which in the Year II was controlled by the Citizen Reuche or Mahey, or rather by his wife. The Mahey establishment was situated at

No. 7 Rue du Chemin-Vert, now No. 51. There were only men there and so Madame de La Fayette found herself the only woman amongst twenty colonials who made no attempt to hide their ill-feeling towards her on account of her zeal for the negro slaves. On the estates she had bought at Cayenne the Marquise had abolished slavery, this rendering her very unpopular with the other owners there. Her stay at the Rue du Chemin-Vert only lasted a week, and on the 14th Brumaire, thanks to Ambassador Morris's intervention, she was transferred together with four other lodgers from Citizen Mahey's to a house of detention better provided with air, space, and food.

This house, which was situated in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, was composed of four large blocks or wings, well enclosed with walls. The courtyards were open, the garden shaded with lime-trees, and there was an excellent view over the surrounding country from the terrace which faced the Boulevard du Midi and Mont-Parnasse. It was a sort of asylum, where a number of suspects had been incarcerated during the Terror and where, as at Belhomme's, they were certain not to be disturbed so long as they paid. Illness served as a pretext to gain admission, one essential being the protection of someone with influence, but especially the display of a well-gilded palm on entrance. First Montprin, and later Desnos, the Directors, despite their principles, had neither of them an exaggerated feeling of tenderness towards

the poor wretches. They were merely carrying on a business that had become extremely profitable, and appreciating this, they had employed the most suitable method, if one may so term it, of ensuring the prosperity of their business. As soon as the invalids had come to an end of their resources—and life was very expensive in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs—they were transferred to an ordinary prison, whence they were soon summoned before the Tribunal of Death. A wretched room not worth 15 Livres cost 500 Livres, and such rooms were bare of the very essentials. One would at least surmise that a sick prisoner would find on his arrival all that he required for relief and treatment—comfortable beds, baths, a dispensary, a surgeon, and nurses—but nothing of the sort existed. If the prisoner wanted a bed, furniture, or remedies, he had to find them out of his own pocket. None but the very wealthy were considered, and from these the Directors netted about 1,200 per cent.

Desnos, accused of avarice, tried to defend himself and pretended, in a letter addressed to the Committee, that the paying guests merely defrayed the expenses of a number of unfortunate *sans-culottes* billeted on him, for whom the State allowed fifty sous per day. He even had the audacity to complain that he had come on the scene too late and had only been able to glean a few lean ears from the already harvested field. As a matter of fact, he was a vile rogue and a consummate scoundrel who battered on the prisoners' need of

his help which they only received after paying through the nose for it. In contradiction of all his protests, the "poor *sans-culottes*" were in such small numbers at his establishment that, out of eighty odd guests, there were generally about sixty aristocrats, the remainder, or supposed *sans-culottes*, acting as servants to the former !

Saint-Huruge, who supplies these details, had stayed with Desnos from the 9th Prairial till the 4th Messidor, sufficient time to make several denunciations, and had been surprised to see there, instead of invalids trying to regain their health, infamous aristocrats decked up as though at Versailles and very much acting the lady and gentleman with their, "How is Madame la Comtesse, Monsieur le Marquis, and Madame la Vicomtesse this morning ?"

Comtesses, Marquis, and Vicomtesses enjoyed a fair measure of liberty, living in peace under the protection thus purchased, and never dreaming of attempting to escape, since nowhere else would they have found such safety.

Dwelling at the Montprin establishment at the same time as Saint-Huruge were the Comte de Périgord, Monsieur de Marcieu, the Baron de Montenclos, the Comte d'Harcourt, the Marquise de Bouthelier, Caumartin, the former Provost of the Merchants, the d'Aglays, and many others who had once foregathered at the Court. Some had their quarters sumptuously fitted up with their own furniture, where they lived in their usual style, receiving their friends and enjoying life, feeding

well, laughing, playing, and plotting. Even love affairs were conducted there. Thus the pretty Marquise de Clermont-Tonnerre was consoling herself for the widow's weeds which Fouquier-Tinville had thrust upon her, with a devoted young man who had sacrificed his freedom in order to be with her, whilst under the eyes of her indulgent mother, Mademoiselle de Vaudreuil, was making hay of the 6,000 Livres damages which another prisoner, a barber's son, had received at the same time as his divorce from the aged and wealthy wife he had rid himself of.

At the time of Madame de La Fayette's arrival at Desnos's house, the "scoundrels of the Upper Aristocracy," as Saint-Huruge termed them, had not been released to any great extent, but a few of them left the place daily, to be replaced by Robespierre's followers. Thus the Marquise spent some time there with Saint-Just's tutor, who prided himself on his pupil, and with the Prosecutor of the Tribunal of Orange, noted, like so many others of his kind, for his cruelty. There, as elsewhere, she won the respect and regard of all, but it must not be imagined that, after spending fifty days of Hell in the Force and the Plessis, she had discovered Paradise in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. In spite of fine furniture and embroidered clothes, the prisoners, rich as they might be, suffered from an extraordinary lack of comfort. They took their meals in a big fireless apartment and had no heating whatsoever in their rooms. In Madame de La Fayette's room, who was very susceptible to cold,

everything used to freeze, and the winter of 1794-5 was very severe. Misery was then at its height, provisions were impossibly dear, bread hard to procure, and so, although his receipts amounted to over 1,500 Livres per month, Desnos was sparing with the prisoners' food and never gave thought to providing wood for them. Madame de La Fayette's physical sufferings were great, but she comforted herself with the thought of soon being at liberty. Moreover, indulgence costing him nothing, the Director was not overstrict and would shut his eyes when paying prisoners received visitors without leave, and thus there entered the Abbé Carichon, disguised as a joiner, who spent long hours with the Marquise, without anyone dreaming of questioning him. He confessed her, prayed with her, and untiringly related to her the execution of the de Noailles ladies, whom he had followed right up to the very last.

The Committee of General Security, being pretty well disposed now towards Madame de La Fayette, allowed the Abbé Sicard, Instructor of the Deaf and Dumb, to go and see her three times a fortnight. Saved by a miracle in September 1792, and borne in triumph from the Abbaye, where he had just escaped being massacred, to the National Assembly, at whose Bar the deputies thronged to embrace him, the Abbé owed to that circumstance, as well as to his brilliant successes with his pupils, a popularity that carried him safely through the persecutions of the Terror without his being compelled to give the oath. Simple to the point of

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credulity in money matters, he showed himself so shrewd in politics as to be able, in the midst of the troubles, to retain control of the work to which he had devoted his whole existence. If he had to make a few formal concessions, he still remained attached to his religion, and for that reason, if no other, his visits to the Desnos house were pleasing to Madame de La Fayette, who found in him the kind of comfort to which she attached the greatest value.

Attempts were still being made to obtain the Marquise's liberty, both by the Minister of the United States, who persistently brought the matter up, and by Madame de Beauchet, who repeatedly called on the Citizen Colombel, a member of the Committee who daily discovered pretexts for fresh delays. At last, all the Members of the Committee were agreeable except Legendre, who, with the puerile obstinacy of the man of the people, refused to give the one requisite signature. Madame de Duras, who was still in Paris, went to Legendre's house in the Place du Carrousel, where he received her at his toilette. Reminding him of the obligation she owed him, she remarked :

"Madame de La Fayette has suffered as much misfortune as I and has therefore equal rights. It is thus unjust to keep her a prisoner."

The former butcher, flattered at receiving a great lady, who in order to ask a favour thanked him for the one he had already granted her, struck too in his simple mind by the clear logic of her argument, allowed himself to be convinced and

promised not to further oppose the liberation. In this he kept his word, and on the 13th Pluviôse a warrant, signed by him and five of his colleagues, reached the Desnos house, ordering the immediate release of the Citizeness La Fayette.

The Marquise's first care was to visit Ambassador Monroe, to thank him for all he had done for her. She also saw Madame de Duras, Monsieur and Madame Beauchet, the Abbés Carrichon and Sicard, Messieurs Skypwith and Mountflorencia, and all those who had laid themselves out to help her or had busied themselves on her behalf. Then, as Paris saddened her—that terrible Paris, mutilated yesterday and still smoking amidst its ruins, blood-stains, and changes, where now the people were breaking up the bust of the god Marat, whom they had adored—she made her way to the house of Madame de Ségur, her aunt, who had retired to Châtenay on the outskirts of Paris. The child of a second marriage and twenty-five years younger than her sister, Madame d'Ayen, the Comtesse de Ségur, née Daguesseau, was about the same age as Madame de La Fayette, to whom she was attached by a bond of very keen affection. Brought up together, marriage had still further solidified their intimacy, and they possessed such similar and rare qualities of heart that the striking portrait of his wife which the Comte Louis-Philippe de Ségur left in a family album scarcely differs from that which his greatest friend, La Fayette, traced of *his* wife in his *Letters and Memoirs*.

When Madame de La Fayette reached Châtenay,

the whole of the Ségur family was gathered in a little country house situated on the village square. Their distress was such that, in order to keep the home together, the Comte, in partnership with his brother, was writing vaudevilles, skits, and small plays which the Comtesse perseveringly re-copied. Every one had to work, and even the children too, at planting vegetables and picking up dead wood in the small park, while blowing on their frozen fingers to warm them.

Her stay at Châtenay did Madame de La Fayette a great deal of good. "Madame de Ségur," she wrote, "has rekindled a great and tender interest in my almost dead life." Furthermore at this time, the Marquise had the great joy of being able to see her son. Being so afraid of compromising her friends that she did not dare to bring him to the Comtesse de Ségur's place, she arranged to meet him at the house of two old Jansenist ladies at Chilly, not far from Châtenay. "On seeing her son again, and finding him such as she had hoped, she experienced such a feeling of rejoicing as she had not believed herself capable of."

"I feel," she said, "a comfort so profound and so vastly beyond my hopes that I realize it perhaps better than any I may expect hereafter."

With a courage rising above material claims, she sacrificed this "comfort" to her duty. Assured that La Fayette, if all correspondence with him had not been interrupted for the last ten months, would have desired to know his son in America, and realizing also the necessity for sending the

boy far away from sights that might debase or too deeply affect his mind, she did not hesitate to send him two thousand leagues away among strangers.

Boissy d'Anglas, one of the members of the new Committee of Public Safety, being in literary relationship with the Comte de Ségur, managed to obtain a passport under the name of Motier for La Fayette's son, and got it signed by his colleagues without their being aware for whom it was intended. The faithful Monsieur Frestel was to accompany his pupil to America, present him to Washington, and not leave him until the time when the whole family, according to the Marquise's secret wish, should be united in the Land of Liberty. The teacher also had a passport but, in order not to awaken suspicion, he embarked on another boat.

After voluntarily separating herself from her son, and having nothing further to detain her at Paris, Madame de La Fayette set out for Auvergne. Her daughters started from Chavaniac and met her at the little village of Vaire, near Clermont, and it would be impossible to recount the gladness of that meeting, nor to describe with what exuberant tenderness Madame de Chavaniac received her nephew's wife. It seemed as though sufferings and dangers, anguish and tears, were all forgotten. The Marquise, glad to be back among her own folk, was quite willing to rejoice with them and hid from them her sorrow at seeing La Fayette's place still empty and her regrets at not having been able to save her mother and her dearest sister from

the scaffold. However, she only remained a week at Chavaniac, for countless duties recalled her to Paris, whither she started off with her two daughters despite the supplications and even reproaches of her aunt. It required all her zealous ardour and will power to thus leave Madame de Chavaniac alone and without a certain home, for if the old lady had bought back Chavaniac from its first purchasers, no money had as yet been paid them towards it. Madame de La Fayette was greatly perturbed at not being able to arrange that matter, but she had no means of so doing while she remained in Auvergne. Luckily, on her way she met her sister and brother-in-law, the Comte and Comtesse de Grammont, who had walked from Villersexel in the Franche-Comté, to Paris to seek her, and not finding her there, had come to Brioude. Madame de Grammont, small and rather stand-offish, lacked grace and had no womanly attribute but her kindness, but she was good beyond all imagining, and only appreciated things for the pleasure she received of giving them away. No sooner had she learned of the sad situation of La Fayette's aunt, who, after years of suffering and devotion, was in danger of being expelled from Chavaniac, than she sold her diamonds to immediately pay off the sums due.

Thereafter, partly on foot and partly in Madame de La Fayette's cabriolet, Monsieur and Madame de Grammont set off again on their journey to accompany their sister and nieces. The events of Prairial detained them at Clermont for three weeks,

but as soon as the trouble died down the party pushed on to Paris.

The Marquise de La Fayette still had designs on getting out of France, but she had no intention of carrying out this project without first obtaining a passport, in order not to have her name on the list of *émigrés* and thus be able to preserve for her children their grandmother's heritage which a decree of the National Convention on the property of Condemned Persons had just restored to her. Whilst Boissy d'Anglas was taking the necessary steps to have a passport made out for her, the Marquise went first to Fontenay and then to La-Grange, where, after many discussions, she was able to prove her claims to the property that had belonged to her mother and busied herself, despite the embarrassment felt by every one, in executing the charitable bequests which the Duchesse d'Ayen had arranged in her will. Finally the long-desired passport was granted, made out for the United States, and on September 5, 1795, Madame de La Fayette embarked at Dunkirk with her two daughters on an American boat.

She felt she might now give herself up to rejoicing at having attained her first object, having provided for all before her departure and seeing the near realization—for the boat was not making for America—of the pious wish that for three years had occupied all her thoughts and guided all her actions.

IV

AT TEN O'CLOCK one morning, one of those carriages to be seen on any post route, after a slow climb up the road coming from Brünn in Moravia, reached the crest of the hills overlooking the Hanna. The plain below seemed fairer than ever in its October colouring, with its horseshoe-shaped villages, its gleaming and meandering river and the capital, Olmütz, whose towers the postillion pointed out with his whip.

In the carriage were Madame de La Fayette and her two daughters who had just come from Vienna, where the Marquise had obtained from the Emperor of Germany the favour of sharing her husband's captivity. Her joy was so great now that her object was about to be gained, and she was so moved to see the walls behind which La Fayette had been buried for months that she felt almost suffocated with tears. When she managed to recover her power of speech, her first thought was to thank God and, clasping her hands, she recited Tobias's hymn aloud :

"Lord, You are great . . . You punish and You save . . . Lord, I bless you !"

The road ran alongside the Morawa with its sleepy waters, beside meadows, vineyards, and fields where women were working barefooted, with scarfs

over their heads. Peasants passed in their picturesque red and green striped costumes, but Madame de La Fayette saw nothing and continued to pray, with her eyes gazing towards the towers of Olmütz, "coming on the wings of love and duty," as Fox described her mission. The boat she had taken at Dunkirk had landed her at Hamburg, whence she had proceeded to Altona on the left bank of the Elbe to visit Madame de Montagu, her sister, and her aunt, Madame de Tessé. In spite of their entreaties and the comforting pleasure of their meeting, she had only wanted to stay just long enough to obtain a passport for Vienna, and when Parish, the United States Ambassador at Hamburg, had furnished her with this, she had started off, travelling under the name of Madame Motier, a citizen of Hartford, in Connecticut. Reaching Vienna, but not without misadventure, she had first gone to her friend's, the Comtesse de Rumbeck, "an excellent and good person," who was pleased to be of assistance, and then to Mesdames d'Ursel and de Windischgratz, relatives of the Comtesse de la Marck. Thanks to their protection, she had been enabled to see the old Prince of Rosenberg, the Grand Chamberlain, to whom she confided her name only after she had been received by him in the name of Motier. Rosenberg had obtained an audience of the Emperor for his heroic suppliant, unknown to the Ministers, and Francis II had accorded a courteous reception to the Marquise, who merely requested permission to go and dwell with her daughters in the prison of Olmütz.

“That I can grant you,” said the Emperor, “but as to Monsieur de La Fayette’s liberty, the affair is somewhat complicated and does not depend on myself alone. You will find him well fed and well treated, and I am sure that your presence will be very welcome to him.”

The Marquise had left the audience “drunk with joy,” and the necessary measures that delayed her departure seemed very slow ; but at last she had been able to get away from Vienna, and at eleven o’clock on the morning of October 24, 1795, she entered Olmütz, having her head rather turned, like her daughters, at reaching there and not quite knowing how she would bear all she would have to go through. Her first visit was to the Town-major, who was either away or disdained to see her, and it was eventually a lieutenant of the garrison who acted as her guide.

The prison, an old Jesuit Monastery, was situated against the ramparts of the town next to the citadel, which was used as a barracks. The Marquise and her daughters entered a dim corridor and were handed over to the porter, who inscribed their names in the register. They were then searched and their purses confiscated, as well as three silver forks they had brought with them. A sentry was walking up and down, striking the damp paving-stones with the butt of his musket. The newcomers passed under an archway and emerged into a spacious courtyard whose entrance was guarded by thirty men. This courtyard was enclosed by bare buildings, surrounded with a peristyle under

which the doors of cells were to be seen. A few more steps and they were there. It seemed as though the warder took ages to find the key, but at last the lock turned, the chains fell down, one door was opened and then another . . .

In a low-roofed cell and clad in cloth of a grey material there sat a pale, thin man with a long beard. It was La Fayette, who for eight months had had no word of his family and gazed at them for a moment without realization till, with a cry, his wife and daughters began hugging and kissing him. He was, alas ! scarcely recognizable, for the alteration in his features was terrifying. His health was impaired, he had a tiresome cough, his back was bent, and he looked like a very old man, but all that was of no consequence to Madame de La Fayette whose sole wish was to see and hear him, to be henceforth ever near him so as to be able to comfort him, care for him, and share his sufferings. They were both very moved and could not tear their gaze from each other. With the exception of a few grey hairs and a slight pallor, she was as beautiful as ever. Anastasie was already become a slender woman full of charm and distinction, whilst Virginie, almost as tall as her sister, had eyes that sparkled through their tears with malice and intelligence.

The day was thus spent without anyone daring to ask questions, and at eight o'clock, after a miserable meal which had to be eaten with the fingers, a warder came to fetch the two girls. The guard fell in in the corridor and the doors

were unlocked. The soldiers crossed their swords, under which passed the blushing Anastasie and Virginie, who drew up her little figure with comical pride. A cell separated from their father's by a thick wall had been allotted to them, but it only contained one wretched mattress for the pair of them, and they trembled at the thought of spending the night there alone.

Remaining with her husband, after the lights had been put out in accordance with the rigid orders of the prison, Madame de La Fayette chatted for a long time with him, for they had so much to tell each other and recollect. The General was aware that there had been a Terror in France, but was ignorant of the names of the victims and was very distressed to learn that, amongst so many others, his mother-in-law, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and his charming cousin, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, had perished on the scaffold.

The Marquise told him of her resistance at Chavaniac, her periods of imprisonment at Brioude and Paris, where several times she had thought her turn had come to go to the guillotine; but here now, with all her miseries forgotten, she found the greatest antidote for her sufferings in the arms of the husband whom she held close to her. Then she questioned him, forgetting herself to think only of him. He told her of his wretched prison life, his arrest at Rochefort, his transfer to Wesel, the insolence he had to put up with from an under-officer, the infamous proposal that had been made to him to regain his liberty by betraying his

country ; his illness at Magdeburg, where, living in a hole six paces by four, a letter from her had soothed the anxieties with which he was consumed. He praised the kindness of Major de Hanff at Neisse, thanks to which he had been able to bear the worst climate in Germany in a damp dungeon, but he could not be silent regarding the punishment he had undergone since his internment at Olmütz, the most rigorous prison in the Austrian Monarchy. Kaunitz, the former Foreign Minister, had not liked him, but the Baron de Thugut, his successor, a hard and unscrupulous man who gave the most implacable orders to the goalers, lost no opportunity of showing his hatred for him. Since the ill-starred attempt at escape La Fayette had made, the prison discipline had become of extreme severity. This attempt had taken place during a drive, when La Fayette overcame his coachman, and Bollmann, a Hanoverian doctor, and Huger, a young American, who had arranged the plan of escape, threatened the gaoler guarding the prisoner with pistols. La Fayette mounted a horse and galloped off, but unfortunately losing his way, was arrested at Sternberg, eight leagues from Olmütz. After that, he was punished with rigid discipline, whilst his would-be liberators were each sentenced to six months' hard labour. He had but two shirts, pants, and a vest of coarse cloth. Chavaniac and Felix, his two servants, imprisoned with him, were prevented from looking after him or even seeing him, whilst the small personal possessions he had brought from Neisse had been confiscated. He

was in solitary confinement and it was over eight months since he had been outside the cell whose damp walls were covered with saltpetre. Certainly no one had dared the suggestion of putting him in irons, but he thought it would be a thousand times preferable to suffer that indignity and be able sometimes to fill his lungs with fresh air. These were evidently the pleasures, according to the Emperor, to be found in the cells at Olmütz, and La Fayette, despite his joy at having her near him, felt obliged to confide to his wife his anxieties for her and his daughters, whom he feared to see crushed by the pitiless discipline and ill-treated.

His fears were but too well founded. The ladies paid their expenses, but it was certain that, save for food, they lacked everything. The very food was almost uneatable on account of its uncleanness, especially for people who only had their fingers to extract the foreign matter that it was full of. The little cell was on a level with the corridor where soldiers passed on their rounds, an infliction that terrified the two girls. Like their mother, they were cut off from all religious consolation, and it was forbidden them to hear Mass, although it was said in a church adjacent to the buildings. They had no communication with the outside, and it was in vain that they asked for a woman to clean out their rooms, and La Fayette's servant was not allowed to wait on them. The Marquise, relying on what had been told her at Vienna, made all the requests she deemed fit to make, writing to the Emperor of Germany, the

War Minister, Monsieur de Ferraris, and the Officer in Command at Olmütz, but the letters all remained unanswered.

All communication with Latour-Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy was forbidden, and Madame de La Fayette was very distressed to know these faithful friends so close without being able to push down the hollow wall that prevented them being seen. She endeavoured to brighten their life for them by requesting that they might be allowed to pass a few hours in the daytime with her husband, but this had no result. She had already written requesting forks, for they were all eating with their fingers, and she would have appreciated a change of clothing for La Fayette, who still wore the same grey shorts that had been given him for decency's sake when his wife and daughters arrived. To cap all, the major in command or chief gaoler of the prison was a man of inconceivable barbarity. Fortunately he rarely favoured them with his presence, but the lieutenant who took his place was servile and half-witted, and the soldiers, for the most part, followed their leaders' example.

In reality, however hard and severe the prison treatment, La Fayette and his family had the rare felicity of being together. At eight every morning the Marquise visited her daughters and remained with them till eleven, which was the dinner hour, when the whole family congregated in the General's cell and remained there till the evening. La Fayette did his German lessons, or occasionally a little Latin, or read aloud some simple

tale that everyone listened to with interest. Anastasie sketched a caricature of the Corporal of the Guard on her thumb-nail or supplemented the lack of workers by her toil, making her father some slippers from the cloth of an old coat. Madame de La Fayette looked after Virginie—instructing her orally, for pens and ink had to be economized—or else busied herself over her husband. The hours thus spent were delightful, and it was quite a wrench when, after supper, the gaolers came to put the young ladies in their cage.

“The lack of religious assistance was very much felt by my mother,” wrote Madame de Lasteyrie, “but she felt that it was God who had brought her to that prison, and that He had combined for her the greatest of happiness with the accomplishment of a very pleasant duty. With all the ardour of her faith and tender heart, she kept herself in touch with those dear ones who were already in possession of Heavenly rewards, telling herself that she owed all that was happening to her to their intercession. Placing herself under their eyes, she lived with her memories which she felt she must save for us, and it was with a toothpick and a little Indian ink that she wrote my grandmother’s life on the page-margins of a volume of Buffon.”

Later on, the *Life of Madame la Duchesse d’Ayen* was printed at the Château de Dampierre through the agency of the Duchesse de Montmorency. One example of this edition is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and another is included



LA FAYETTE.

From a sketch in the Bibliothèque Nationale
(*Portrait Gallery.*)

in the library of the Château of La Grange-Blesneau, belonging to the Marquis de Lasteyrie.

Thus for Madame de La Fayette the days passed in a comforting and pleasant way, although the régime of the Austrian gaol where she was shut up by favour was severe. She was astonished at being able to recover the faculty of being so happy and almost reproached herself with being so satisfied whilst her husband was in prison. Until that time she had always suffered from her love, either by frequent separations and business which drew the General's attention away from her or by dangers to which he was exposed, but now she was enjoying the happiness that had been the object of her desires all her life.

Few men, indeed, possessed such a gift of fascination as did La Fayette, a vague and irresistible power felt by all who came into contact with him, and yet all the more strange since at first glance he displayed no grace either of air or manners. With sandy hair and level expressionless grey eyes, his face was pale and stolid, and his coldness of attitude lent him a semblance of embarrassment and shyness. But that envelope hid the most ardent of souls and keenest of intelligences. He was generous, enthusiastic, and extremely sentimental, of agreeable humour and great kindness. When he spoke, his serious voice, that sounded like music to the ear, conquered and carried away crowds. For he was a charmer, possessing all the qualities that attract and captivate—kindness, pluck, chivalrous and disinterested opinions, and a noble

pride of birth ; and his very failings—carelessness and lightness, lack of discernment, and a rather marked credulity—if they were blameworthy, did not alienate sympathy from him. Thus, of all the characters of the Revolution he was, in spite of his faults, the most popular and the most hated, because his enemies, who dreaded his marvellous influence and prestige, were pitiless towards him. Impossible to hear or see him without being on his side, and with his presence he always carried the day. Before August 10th he was summoned to the Bar of the Assembly as a rebel, and there his personality roused the hostile deputies to cheers. He had the gift of persuading and winning over others to causes he was defending. Although his wife, who excelled him in judgment, exercised a great ascendancy over him, she had become a “Fayettist whole-heartedly from the start.” She allowed herself to be weaned to her husband’s ideas, despite their disconcerting contradictions, and accepted his resolutions, painful though they might be. “Decide,” she loved to tell him, “you are our leader, and it is our happy lot to obey you.” She obeyed him with pleasure in everything, for she had vowed to him an exalted and unchangeable tenderness. In opposition to her secret fears and hidden tears, she had rejoiced more than he at the successes he had won, and had suffered more from the calumnies with which his enemies had tried to besmirch his name. All her regards and thoughts were for him beyond anything. When she arrived at Olmütz he was still ill, and each time his cough

grew worse she trembled, but when it got better it became a day of rejoicing for her. She refrained from contradicting him or talking to him of what might have come between them and was very near her heart, for he was by no means a fervent Christian, whilst her devotion was a thing of rock, yet she never preached at him nor strove to combat his doubts, contenting herself with expressing hope, and feeling for her "dear infidel" such an enthusiasm that she had no slightest doubt of his ultimate salvation, persuaded that God would think twice before damning such a man as he was.

He let himself be loved, loving her in return, and "he had," said Madame de La Fayette, "a very admirable way of loving," especially as, being in prison, it was no longer possible for him to sacrifice his love to some noisy enterprise. Not that he would ever have become a wallower in ambition, but he had felt the attraction of glory, had been intoxicated by popular acclamation, spoiled by successes of all kinds, and had not seen the tears that had so deftly been hidden from him; and now for the moment impulsive measures and foolhardy schemes were forbidden him and he must content himself with acquiring inactive fame by expiation, in the dungeons of Olmütz, of the crime of being the Apostle of Liberty, and confessing it in bondage. That attitude he adopted, and there being nothing and no one to distract him from it, his intimacy was full of charm for her. He endured the sufferings of captivity with good humour, comforting his wife and daughters, was

In the Shadows

assiduous and true, affable and kindly, and constantly fussing round Madame de La Fayette. It was for her he was eloquent, her he sought to please. So great was the happiness she derived, even in prison, from being all his and having him all to herself, that she actually found him more attractive in his convict's dress than ever before.

Each day she was glad to note the effect of her presence on the prisoner, who, during the few months since his solitude had been interrupted, had become the lightest-hearted of all. In spite of lack of fresh air and exercise, Anastasie and Virginie also bore the unhealthy prison régime fairly well, but unfortunately the same could not be said of Madame de La Fayette, who began to suffer from headaches and to show signs that her blood was out of order. The sudden transit from very violent agitation to a most sedentary existence with privations and bad nourishment had all contributed to her sickness, whilst her cell was damp and cold and the air she breathed corrupted by the latrines of the neighbouring barracks. At first she had pains in her knees, shoulder, and back, her limbs felt bruised, and even when she was in bed no position seemed tolerable. Her complexion grew yellow, she became thin and altered, and her usual smile languished on her discoloured lips. The doctor who visited her did not know French, but expressed his anxiety to La Fayette in Latin. Three years of moral fatigue and physical suffering, long months of imprisonment, the divers and severe régimes she had been forced to undergo, had

brought about in the poor woman that serious complaint, common enough amongst prisoners, scurvy, then known as Dutch Fever or Mariner's Disease.

In the month of January, symptoms of the complaint began to show themselves with more severity. Her gums dried up, her arms and then her legs swelled, painful sores formed, and walking became impossible. The doctor tried to apply the remedies in vogue at the time—such as, doubtless, lemon as prescribed by Kramer, and salads as Lind advised—but there was no response, and it seemed indeed as though all treatment would be ineffectual if the health and food conditions that had induced the disease were not improved. Her best course would have been to get out of Olmütz, but it was unthinkable to suggest such a thing to Madame de La Fayette. All the same, the General and his children, alarmed at the progress of the malady, decided, on the doctor's advice, to beg the Marquise to write to the Emperor asking leave to go and consult specialists at Vienna. She at first refused point-blank, but later, yielding to their affectionate insistence, ended by consenting, not without repeating that "never had she displayed more praiseworthy submission to her husband's desires."

Not until the end of seven weeks did the Commandant of Olmütz bring her a verbal refusal to permit her to leave the prison unless she agreed, in writing, not to ask to re-enter it. Her reply was soon given.

"I owed it to my family," wrote the plucky

woman, "to ask the necessary assistance for my health, but the price demanded was not agreeable to me. I cannot forget that, whilst we were both ready to die, I by Robespierre's tyranny, and Monsieur de La Fayette from the sufferings of his captivity, I was neither allowed to receive any news of him nor let him know that we, his children and I, were still alive. I could not bear the thought of exposing myself to another such separation."

After alternating changes for the better or the worse, the warmth of summer had somewhat improved Madame de La Fayette's condition, but she still had a painful sore on her leg, and no alleviation of the prison régime had taken place. She had not even an arm-chair to sit in, but such privations and sufferings in no way diminished either her serenity or her marvellous keenness of intellect. Leaving La Fayette to his political reveries, she would write, or, if too tired herself, would dictate to her daughters, the short letters she was permitted to send, under the supervision of the officer of the guard, to Madame de Montagu and the banker who forwarded the money for their board and lodging. Any other correspondence was forbidden, and to her sorrow she was never allowed to write to her son whom she knew to be with Washington, lest news of the prisoners should be circulated in America, the very thing the Court of Vienna desired to avoid.

It was also forbidden La Fayette and his family to communicate with their companions in adversity, but they had discovered a means, first with the aid

of a Pan-pipe and then by bribing the sentries with part of their rations. At night they would let down the food on a string through the double bars of their window to the soldier on guard below, and he would pass on the attached packet to Messieurs de Latour-Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy. Similarly, when Madame de La Fayette was prevented from writing to her sisters in the month of March 1796, the Rector of Olmütz University got some news through for her, and organized a secret correspondence which a friend carried over the Austrian frontier.

In this way, La Fayette's partisans came to learn of the rigorous treatment meted out to the prisoners of Olmütz, and in America, England, and France, public opinion was roused at the tale of such misfortune.

Washington, though compelled by his position as President to maintain a reserve he perhaps exaggerated, yet desired the enlargement of the "Hero of Independence," and issued orders to the representatives of his country at the various Courts of Europe that they should not allow the Ambassadors of Austria to ignore the people's wish in favour of La Fayette. On May 15, 1796, he went further by writing a confidential letter to the Emperor of Germany, begging him to allow the prisoner permission to come to America under whatever condition or restriction it might please His Majesty to impose. This move had no happier results than any that had preceded it, and when, in December 1796, Gouverneur Morris, then resident

at Vienna, attempted, at the instigation of Madame de Staël and Madame de Montagu, to open the prison doors for La Fayette and his wife, he found himself opposed to the ill-will of the Austrian Prime Minister, the Baron de Thugut, who insolently denied that the captives were being hardly used and simply declared that the Marquise and her daughters were free to leave whensoever they desired.

In England, Masclet, a French refugee, had run a brilliant campaign in La Fayette's favour in the *Morning Chronicle*, wherein he had published the letter from a supposed Austrian Officer, containing numerous details of the intolerable situation of the prisoners, and had made use of the long complaint that one of them, Latour-Maubourg, had managed to get through to Pillet and Masson, the General's aides-de-camp. "We are in such a bad state," wrote Latour-Maubourg, "that whatever be the duration of our stay, I should not care to guarantee that we shall all come out of here alive." The letter also contained political considerations that Masclet did not fail to bring into prominence, representing La Fayette as the Champion of Liberty whom it was a disgrace and neglect on the part of the English, and especially the Whig readers of the *Morning Chronicle*, to allow to languish in captivity. These points were brought before the House of Commons in a pathetic speech by Fitzpatrick, who was followed to the Bar by Fox and Sheridan and supported by the members of the Opposition, but Pitt, the Prime Minister,

having dryly invoked England's neutrality, the House rejected the motion which Fitzpatrick had moved.

In France, the Executive of the Directorate considered the prisoners as having indisputable claims to the esteem of all wise and enlightened friends of Liberty. Barthélemy, the Minister in Switzerland, had already, in 1795, while negotiating the Basle Treaties, tried to effect the liberation of his friend La Fayette at the same time as the members of the Convention were exchanged with Louis XV's daughter, but the "Directorate was obliged to act with the greatest circumspection and had not yet sufficiently imposed its will on Europe to be able to force the proud Government of Austria to unhand its three victims who had surrendered to them."

Two years later, in 1797, the situation had undergone a complete change. The interior administration had acquired strength and regularity. The armies of the Republic were everywhere victorious. Moreau was advancing towards the Upper Danube. Bonaparte had crossed the Alps, had confirmed himself as a great leader by a series of successes and had just rejoined Joubert at Loeben, forty leagues from Vienna. Austria desired peace, and the Directors did not fail to profit by that desire to demand from its Government the immediate liberation of La Fayette and his two comrades.

Many steps had been taken to aid the illustrious sufferer. Madame de Staël had interested Barras in his fate, and the latter had written to Bonaparte

entrusting him with the negotiations. On May 5th, Bonaparte and General Clarke, who had been attached to him with ambassadorial powers, met the envoys of Austria at Udine. On June 2nd, Clarke sent a note to the Marquis de Gallo, Secretary of State of the Empire, demanding the prisoners; on the 30th, Bonaparte reported this action to the Directorate, and on the 12th Dubois-Crancé replied to the French Plenipotentiaries, "I am glad to have no more doubts than yourselves of the success certain to ensue from your demands."

Monsieur de Talleyrand, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, was very busy in the interest of the prisoners. Barthélemy, Masclet, Pillet, Masson, and Madame de Staël were clamouring for their release, and the Marquis de Gallo had pledged his word to free them. Lastly, Romeuf, a former aide-de-camp of La Fayette's and his devoted friend, had just been attached to General Clarke's diplomatic mission.

The Baron de Thugut then decided to dispatch the Marquis de Chasteler to Olmütz to lay before the prisoners the conditions imposed by the Emperor regarding their enlargement.

Chasteler left Vienna on July 23rd, and on the 25th saw La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and Bureaux de Pusy separately in their cells and disclosed to them the orders of his master, who was disposed to set them at liberty without further delay on condition that they promised, in writing, to betake themselves, as they had expressed the intention of doing, to America, and in any case at

no time to enter the hereditary provinces without special authorization.

La Fayette and his companions refused to sign the agreement, reserving two exceptions, the possibility of being invested with a military command or charged with a diplomatic mission. Madame de La Fayette had approved that reply and in the midst of her sufferings felt she would have borne many more months of prison for the satisfaction it gave her.

On July 28th, Chasteler reported the result of his mission to the Baron de Thugut and, the prisoners' reservation appearing dangerous to the Emperor, he gave orders that their "liberation should stand over."

A few days later, Romeuf, dispatched to Vienna by General Clarke, learned of the hitch in the negotiations, but was received on August 7th by the Baron, who made no effort to conceal his displeasure from him. "La Fayette would be free," Thugut remarked, "had he been willing to give the promise asked of him." There was a further question perturbing both sides, that they did not know what to do with the prisoners nor to whom to hand them over. The Directorate did not desire their return to France, and the Emperor of Germany would not allow them to remain in his domains. For his part, Thugut protested that he would be but too pleased to be rid of "the whole La Fayette caravan, wife, children, and other companions of captivity." Austria was compelled to make peace with France, and the Minister was

weary of wrangling over such a small matter at a time when he needed to draw on all his resources of skill to combat Bonaparte, who acted towards him like a Roman Proconsul and showed himself as genial in negotiation as in battle.

Romeuf, who was devoted to La Fayette, knew how to make profit out of the state of mind that Thugut was unable to conceal from him, and took up his defence with ardour. He displayed such insistence and was so persuasive that he finally succeeded in effecting a compromise ; that the prisoners should be handed over to the charge of the American Consul at Hamburg, who should give an undertaking to have them removed out of the territory of the Empire and not to retain them longer than twelve days.

For Thugut this was a means of seeming to yield to the demands of France, but the question now arose whether La Fayette, who in contradiction of what he had asked in 1793, had declared that he would be loth to desire a liberation in which his country had no part, would accept such terms. He did, however, accept them, and showed himself quite content with the new arrangements.

Romeuf left at once for Hamburg to lay the formalities imposed by Vienna before Pitkern, the new United States Consul, whom he considered it might not be out of the way to have encouraged by the Paris Cabinet ; but Pitkern seized upon such a chance of rendering a service to La Fayette with zest, whilst Thugut, who had seemed at one moment disposed to release the prisoners, daily

raised fresh difficulties, doubtless thinking to thereby gain some advantage for Austria in the treaty being then drawn up. Meanwhile, the captives of Olmütz were losing patience.

"We are still here," wrote Madame de La Fayette to Pillet, who had come as far as Dresden, "our gaolers of every rank know nothing about our liberation and we suspect some fresh infamy on the part of the Austrian Cabinet."

"If you knew," she added, "of the alarming details given for several months, but especially the last few weeks, on our health, and particularly mine and my eldest daughter's, you would be aghast at the barbarity displayed by a Court that prefers to see us die here than to expedite our passports. Gilbert has got his cough and feverishness again. I have both arms septic and swollen, the sores on my legs are unhealed, and Anastasie is suffering from the same complaint."

It was the Marquise de La Fayette who was the very humble interpreter of the Triumvirate prisoner, for she never ceased from writing or negotiating. If Pillet, Romeuf, Emmery, Bathélemy, Masclet, and Talleyrand did not all actually correspond with her, they drew inspiration from her advice and received the wishes she formed. She tried to checkmate the Baron de Thugut's treachery, and guessed at the compassion that she and her companions in bondage inspired in the Marquis de Gallo. There was no problem that daunted her, and however much she might disclaim it, there is no doubt that it was she who suggested the clever

moves which Madame Bureaux de Pusy and Madame de Latour-Maubourg made in their husbands' interests.

"From the depths of the cell where she had willingly shut herself up," wrote Thomas, "that energetic woman conceived and controlled a complete diplomatic system to combat that of Thugut. Clearness of thought, rapidity of decision, logical tenacity of conceptions, prudence in restraining impatient helpers, genius in suggesting plans and dictating letters at once pathetic and firm . . . all those live in her letters." Likewise the fears she expressed were justified, and she was not the only one to protest against the Austrian Minister's faithlessness. Louis Romeuf, at Hamburg, could not understand how there had been as yet no sequel to the Baron de Thugut's promise and, tired of sending useless messages, was on the point of returning to General Clarke at Udine to reopen the whole discussion diplomatically, when, on September 19, 1797, La Fayette, his wife and two daughters, Maubourg, Pusy, and the servants who had shared their master's captivity, saw the doors of their prison open before them.

THE PRISONERS LEFT Olmütz on September 19th under the escort of an Austrian Major, who most of the time led the way sitting in his carriage. After Dresden, a succession of friends joined the convoy—Louis Romeuf, Pillet, and Theodore de Lameth, the General's former aides-de-camp, and then Madame de Maubourg, Madame de Pusy and their children. Their progress became one of triumph, for the people in the towns and villages on the way pressed forward to greet La Fayette and his companions, who every day were recovering their strength. The sight of so many faces appeared both welcome and extraordinary, for it had been months since they had had such an experience. They admired the sun and traced the passage of the clouds, listened with delight to the thousand and one voices of Nature calling, and felt unspeakable joy at being once more in the midst of life and light.

Their sole cause for unhappiness was the Marquise de La Fayette, who was by no means recovered. Her state of health required so much nursing that the journey took a whole fortnight, although she was very plucky all the way, making efforts to

share each one's happiness and to reply to the numerous sympathetic messages that she received.

Hamburg was reached on October 4th, where the prisoners were handed over by the Austrian Resident, Buol de Schauenstein, to the care of Mr. Pitcairn, the United States Consul, in the presence of Reinhard, the French Minister, and Gouverneur Morris. They were really free at last. Their stay at Hamburg only lasted two days, during which La Fayette saw his generous friend Archenoltz, the poet Klopstock, and a few French people. The Americans banded together to send him a touching address, and then the General, with his wife and daughters, and the whole of the Maubourg family, left for Holstein.

On October 10th, they were at Ploen, a Danish town situated between two lakes, the Big and Little Ploener. On the opposite side of the Big Ploener, the Comtesse de Tessé, sister of the Duc d'Ayen, had for a year been in possession of the Wittmold Estate, a property in full running order, where she had settled down after leaving Altona. More far-seeing than most of the *émigrés*, she had not flitted from France like a swallow, laden only with the plumage of her wings, but had provided herself with certain sums of money which had put her out of reach of want and brought her the pleasure of being of assistance to others. In this way she had been able to gather together at Wittmold, with other exiles, Madame de Montagu, her niece's family, and was anxiously awaiting the arrival of her other niece, Madame de La Fayette,

her nephew whom she doted on, and the charming girls she had seen twenty-three months previously when they passed through Altona.

Since Madame de Montagu had been apprised of the early arrival of her sister, she had scarcely left the shores of the lake, and when, on the morning of October 10th, she heard a horn blown on the other side, she dashed off, mad with excitement, to fetch old Monsieur de Mun, jumped into a boat with him, and was thus able to be the first to greet Madame de La Fayette.

She found her sadly changed but still sweet and affectionate, with pale, thin face and a certain gracefulness even in a state of illness so unsuited to grace. Her nieces, Anastasie and Virginie, were a little altered, and the General looking well and as calm and kindly as ever.

A flotilla of small boats transported the poor liberated prisoners to Wittmold. La Fayette, Anastasie, and Monsieur de Latour-Maubourg were in one boat with the Marquis de Montagu, who had gone over to Ploen the evening before. In Monsieur de Mun's boat were Madame de Montagu, her younger niece, Virginie, and her sister, Madame de La Fayette, who was reciting Tobias's hymn, by way of thanksgiving.

The sky was clear, powdered with light clouds on the horizon, the calm waters of the lake glittered like polished metal, and the wind was in the right direction. The crossing, with an accompaniment of strenuous horn-blowing and mystic women's voices singing thanksgiving hymns in chorus, did

not last long, and on landing, they found Madame de Tessé on the shore waiting to receive nephews and nieces with real tenderness. For several days there were little intimate gatherings at the house over which she presided with much grace.

Wittmold was a vast domain, forming a peninsula on the lake, comprising meadows, fields of hops and flax, and a large farmstead. During the day, Madame de Tessé visited her property with her guests, showing them her cattle and poultry ; there were walks through the meadows bordered with apple-trees, and as there were several French families residing at Ploen, there was a continual coming and going of boats on the Big Ploener. Madame de Montagu, stout as a tower, was indefatigable—counting, writing, busying herself over everything ; she was the housekeeper of the establishment. Shy amongst strangers, she was gently malicious among her friends, like an angel that had a devil in her. Her husband fussed around repairing damages, and still found time to go off shooting deer in the pine-woods and duck on the lake. The Comte de Tessé, who was a great fisherman, spent the greater part of his time on the lake, when he was not taking part in his wife's plans.

In a milieu of such felicity and calm, Madame de La Fayette's health began to mend. She was as yet unable to go out, but she was never left alone, and her arm-chair was pushed near the window, whence she could look out upon the immense landscape of pasturage and ponds. She set her hand to the work for the *émigrés* that

Madame de Tessé had started and, after so much suffering herself, found great relief in being able to secretly relieve so many others. The General wrote for long hours in his room with Maubourg. Anastasie and Virginie, sewing near their mother, listened to her reading, and nothing amused them more than the incorrigible absent-mindedness of the Abbé de Luchet or the clumsy complacency of Monsieur de Boetland, who, despite a manifest good intention, accomplished more noise than work, and, occasionally, did more harm than good.

In the evening, everyone foregathered in the salon, where Madame de Tessé proved herself a most agreeable hostess. Being childless, she considered her brother's, the Duc d'Ayen's, children as her own, and was always the mainstay and backbone of the family. She was very fond of her nieces and their husbands, but La Fayette was her hero, and as there was community of opinion between them, their taste for politics sometimes evoked sharp discussions among the guests at Wittmold, for all the *émigrés* did not look at things in the same light. Madame de Montagu never having adopted the "new ideas, and the tragical death of her mother and sister having consolidated her mind in this respect," she avoided discussing matters of the Revolution with La Fayette for fear of losing her temper and hurting, and disapproved of the opinions of Theodore de Lameth, who had no such scruples and was very bitter against the Royalists. The Comtesse de Tessé remained liberal and Voltarian, and was no believer in lip-service.

Her conversation was animated, biting, and sententious, and of such imposing firmness that she was listened to despite the frightful grimaces and convulsive twitches of her face that was pitted with small-pox. As to the General, he bore no rancour, no hatred, and was as courteous and kindly in argument as he had ever been known to be, yet under the guise of affability, a phlegmatic pose that deceived no one, he cherished the secret desire of being called upon to act. Had he been able, he would certainly have gone straight into France as Madame de Staël advised him, and on leaving prison, he did not fail, with an eye to the future, to express to Barras the obligations he was under to him, and to write to Bonaparte that he was happy to owe his deliverance to his irresistible arms.

To pass the winter months, doubtless because the climate of Wittmold was too damp and therefore scarcely suitable for Madame de La Fayette, the General rented a neighbouring estate, the Castle of Lhemkhulen, and moved there with his own and Latour-Maubourg's families. There it was that, feeling that his political career was ended, he began, with the assistance of Louis Romeuf, to write his Memoirs, and produced for the charming Madame de Simiane, who had come there to see him, his "Souvenirs on leaving prison." He also received a visit from Madame de Maisonneuve, Latour-Maubourg's sister, and from the excellent Madame Smith. Finally, during the month of February, George de La Fayette, who had taken ship for France on learning of his parents' libera-

tion, arrived at the Castle of Lhemkhulen. His mother was delighted to find that under Washington's fatherly guidance he had become a man, and everyone was happy to see him.

Madame de Maisonneuve had brought with her the prisoner of Olmütz's younger brother, Charles de Latour-Maubourg, whose charming face, together with the lofty sentiments that he expressed in an excessively laconic fashion, greatly captivated Anastasie de La Fayette. Marriage was talked of. Monsieur de Mun and Madame de Montagu were against the suggestion, and Madame de Tessé opined that it was madness to unite hunger to thirst, but the young people replied that they were not afraid of poverty and succeeded in convincing every one, even Madame de Tessé, who offered the trousseau, so that the wedding ceremony took place at her house on May 9, 1798.

At that time, Madame de La Fayette was still such an invalid that she had to be carried to church by her son and future son-in-law, but two months later, she was much fitter and felt strong enough to go to France, where family affairs beckoned her imperiously, as her husband had lost all that he had. The Directorate had just ordered the sale of the estates that remained to him in Brittany.

She started at the end of July with her son-in-law and her two daughters, and La Fayette went as far as Hombourg with her. She left Monsieur and Madame Charles de Latour-Maubourg at Vianen in Holland and continued her journey to Paris with Virginie, where she stayed in the Rue

de l'Université with that Monsieur Beauchet who had helped her during the Terror and remained ever devoted to her. Her health was now good, and she had no thought of being careful about it. In spite of all her efforts, she was unable to get her mother's estate settled. The difficulties were too numerous, the heirs, with the exception of Madame de La Fayette and Madame de Grammont, being either away, as refugees or dead in the eyes of the law. Madame de Montagu was in Holstein and the Vicomte de Noailles in America. The Comte de Thézan, widower of another of the Duchesse d'Ayen's daughters, was very ill-disposed towards La Fayette on account of his opinions, and, moreover, resided in Germany with his daughter. As for the Duc d'Ayen, he had married Madame Golowskine and was living with her on the Coteau des Utins, on the shores of the Lake of Geneva. Under such conditions it was impossible to come to any definite settlement, but Madame de La Fayette succeeded at least in getting an inventory drawn up, and allotting to each one his approximate share.

She took the trouble to sound the members of the Directorate concerning her husband's eventual return to France, busied herself about repatriating certain refugees who had been recommended to her and finding situations for them, and also obtained for Felix Pontonnier, who had followed her husband into the prisons of Prussia and Austria, a place in the Colonial Office. She negotiated with great skill for the interests of the exiles in political circles, saw deputies and men of influence, and

called on one of the members of the Directorate, La Reveillère-Lépeaux. "Never," wrote the mystic founder of Natural Religion, "have I experienced such deep emotion as was caused me by the sight of this woman become immortal by her most generous devotion and her wonderful example of conjugal piety . . . but I was compelled to express to her my very keen and sincere regret at not being able to promise her the sure return of La Fayette and his companions in misfortune to France."

Thus, despite the feelings of admiration she evoked, Madame de La Fayette was unable to smooth the difficulties, and the General had to resign himself to an endless exile. Although free, he was dragging his fetters with him, for if he was thought too republican at Vienna, he was considered too much of a royalist at Paris. He might have gone to America, but it seems he preferred a refuge whence he could observe all that was going on in his own country. That is why, while his wife was in France, he left Wittmold and went to stay with his daughter, Madame de Latour-Maubourg, at Vianen in Holland.

The family was installed in an uncomfortable dwelling whose bare walls were whitened and scrubbed with typical Dutch cleanliness. They all regretted the dear peninsula of Wittmold and Madame de Tissé's charming hospitality, but La Fayette felt more in his place and more at his ease than in a royalist country, and being of a very formal nature, rejoiced at seeing a "Tree of

Liberty " outside his window. He was very pleased to receive the expressions of sympathy shown him by the Batavian patriots, and although living very much in retirement, went sometimes as far as Utrecht to meet General Van Ryssel, a veteran of the Revolution in the Netherlands.

It was at Vianen that Madame de La Fayette rejoined her family at the end of February 1799, bringing news from France, particularly of Madame de Chavaniac, whom she had gone to see in Auvergne. The General was astonished at his wife's good health and glad to find Virginie grown. The Marquise was charmed with the little daughter that Anastasie had brought into the world during her absence (Célestine, who later married Monsieur de Brigode).

On Easter Eve, in the spring of 1799, arrived Madame de Montagu and Madame de Grammont, the first from Wittmold, the second from France, to stay a long time with their sister. Madame de Montagu was thirty-one, but her sister Madame de Grammont, although a year younger, appeared much older than her. Her devotion was meticulous, for she took her sisters to Mass every morning and with them composed litanies that they recited together after supper. More often than not, the cheer was somewhat meagre at these supper parties, for they lacked many things that they needed. Madame de La Fayette's inspiration, when some special dish was required, generally produced poached eggs ; and when they felt too cold in the fireless rooms, they put on shawls and capes.

The three sisters had really come together to reach a settlement regarding their mother's property, which they lost no time in doing, and in spite of the pleasure they derived from each other's society, they separated again on May 5th, Madame de Montagu to return to Wittmold, taking with her for her father-in-law, Monsieur de la Baume, who, previous to the Revolution, would have turned her out of doors if she had received Madame de La Fayette, some clothing which the latter had brought back from Chavaniac; Madame de Grammont returned to Villersexel, and the Marquise, condemned to be parted from those she loved until the end of ceaselessly recurring differences and business affairs, set off again for Paris with her younger daughter.

At Paris, things were in a turmoil, for the Terrorist Party having discredited the Directorate during the month of Prairial, the Mountain Party were beginning to hold their heads up once more, talking of re-establishing the Committee of Public Security and the guillotine, and spreading a great deal of panic amongst honest folk. On top of all that, news from the battle-fronts was causing much alarm, for the frontiers of France were being menaced on all sides, and in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, her troops were being forced back, whilst an Anglo-Russian army of forty thousand troops had just landed in Holland. His wife was greatly perturbed as to what might happen to La Fayette if the armies of the Coalition invaded the country where he had taken refuge, and in her anxiety she pictured him already choosing between

the scaffold, Siberia, or a return to France. Under the circumstances she resolved to go and see Sieyès of the Directorate, whom his partisans were deifying and the nonchalance of his colleagues making into the head of the new Government. Sieyès, who had had perhaps, like Carnot, ideas about La Fayette, did not refuse to receive the Marquise, but neither discussion, prayers nor tears would move that man of ice. "He was not the General's enemy," he said; "he desired his return, but thought that it would be dangerous."

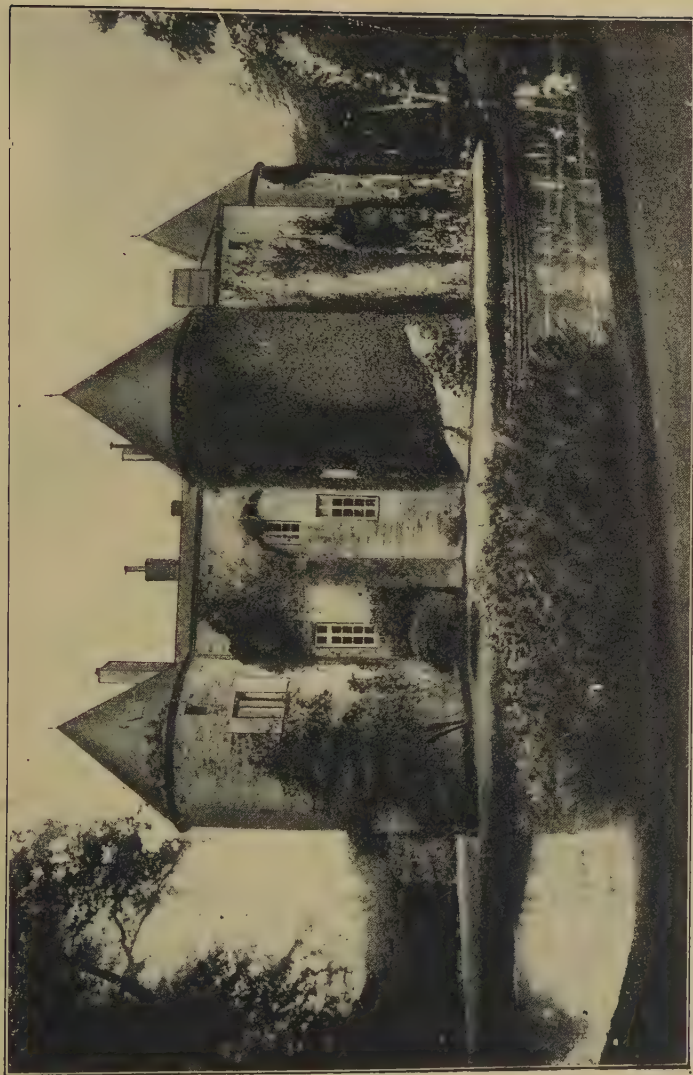
"You might have him put in prison?" queried Madame de La Fayette.

"Worse than that," replied the Director, but, he advised, "he would be in safety with the King of Prussia."

"Who kept him a prisoner!" retorted the Marquise. "No! If he must go to prison, Monsieur de La Fayette would prefer one in his own country, but he has more faith in her than that."

All was still in an alarming state of uncertainty at the capital, but for some weeks Bonaparte had been making his way from Alexandria to Marseilles. On the 17th Vendémiaire he landed at Saint-Raphaël, and on the 24th was in Paris, where a delirious people proclaimed him as a liberator.

Madame de La Fayette made her way into the house in the Rue de la Victoire, where all the politicians were flocking, and there Bonaparte told her that La Fayette's life depended on the preservation of the Republic. She immediately wrote her husband to send his congratulations to the



THE CHATEAU DE LA GRANGE.

Present day.

(By courtesy of the Marquis of Lasteyrie.)

victorious general, which La Fayette did not fail to do. A few days later, he learned of the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, and, summoned by his wife, set out for Paris without any authorization.

On receiving the news of this unforeseen return, Bonaparte, fearing that La Fayette had come back to France to take a prominent part in affairs, did not hide his irritation, for he desired above all things to be at the head of the nation which he was already commencing to lay his yoke on. He gave it out that La Fayette must return at once to Utrecht, whence he would solicit his return, like that of all the rest, but Madame de La Fayette, dreading nothing worse than a fresh exile, made up her mind to go and see the Consul herself and brave his wrath. Bonaparte was struck by the boldness of this move, by the skilful eloquence and nobility of this heroine whose devotion he knew well.

“You have plenty of spirit, Madame,” he told her bluntly, “but you understand nothing of these affairs.”

Being in no sense a man of sentiment, he guessed instinctively what might damage or profit his ambition. Realizing that La Fayette's popularity would increase in exile, whereas it would fade and disappear eventually in the distant country estates where he promised to reside, he let himself appear to yield to Madame de La Fayette's entreaties and authorized her husband to settle down with her at La Grange-Blesneau, on the property she had inherited from the Duchesse d'Ayen. The Duchesse d'Ayen's estate was still undivided and the suc-

cession was not finally settled until 1801, but it was already an understood thing that the Château of La Grange-Blesneau should belong to Madame de La Fayette.

It was at this château, situated near Rosoy in Brie, that the Marquise de La Fayette lived from that time onwards, enjoying a happiness such as she had never dared dream of. The first task she set about was the removal from the list of *émigrés* of Latour-Maubourg, Bureaux de Pusy, and all the other officers who had followed La Fayette to Rochefort on August 17, 1792. There were many difficulties to be overcome, many steps to be taken, but the Marquise returned time and time again to Paris to plead the cause of her friends and carried her point in the end. She also succeeded in bringing the dispersed members of her own family back to their country. Madame de Montagu arrived in Paris in February 1800 and installed herself in a furnished house in the Rue de Courty, where the Duchesse de Duras had been staying for some weeks; and in the month of October in the same year, Madame de La Fayette, at a reception of Joseph Bonaparte's at Mortefontaine, obtained the First Consul's authorization for the return of her aunt and uncle de Tessé.

Bonaparte's attitude was now distinctly milder. He saw that the former Commandant of the National Guard would never be an adversary, was flattered by the approbation that this incorrigible Liberal bestowed openly upon him, and even went so far as to seek to use what prestige was left to

his name by offering him a senatorship. If La Fayette, doubtless on his wife's advice, refused the proposal made him through Talleyrand, the friendly offer brought a sub-lieutenancy in a regiment of Hussars to his son, and to himself, the payment of his retired pension which was raised to 6,000 Livres. It was also rumoured that Joseph Bonaparte had thought of marrying his brother Lucien to the General's younger daughter, Virginie de La Fayette.

In spite of his attitude of seeming more occupied with farming than politics, La Fayette had not surrendered his dreams of glory. He had thought, after the 18th Brumaire, that the reign of Liberty, such as he had conceived it, was about to begin, but he was soon undeceived, and when the establishment of the Consulate for life was arranged, his principles compelled him to vote against that "permanent magistracy" which brought about a definite rupture between the hesitant ghost of a vague liberalism and the vigorous organization of Modern France.

It was not always easy for Madame de La Fayette to reconcile the General with his lot, and it was in spite of himself that, like Cincinnatus, the whole of his activities were directed to agriculture, but the Marquise's share in Madame d'Ayen's succession, his 6,000 Livres pension, and the tolerance of his creditors, permitted him to live quietly without the money worries that had afflicted him in his exile. In 1801 the Duchesse d'Ayen's succession was rigidly but amicably settled. Madame de La Fayette had the Grange, Madame de

Montagu Fontenay-en-Brie, Madame de Grammont estates in the Pas-de-Calais, Mademoiselle de Thézan lands between the Grange and Fontenay, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles' sons handsome farms in Seine-et-Marne. The total of Madame de La Fayette's share amounted to 547,716 francs, the Château de La Grange being calculated at 36,000 francs.

At that time La Fayette still owed more than 200,000 francs to the American friends who had assisted him in his exile. They asked nothing in repayment, and in 1824, Congress meeting at Washington, made him a present of \$200,000, and an estate comprising 24,000 acres. Finally in 1826, La Fayette received 325,767 francs from the *émigrés'* indemnity. He set his estates in order, reforested and extended them, and started to raise sheep. Their life of retirement was a fulfilment of the Marquise's wishes, for she was happy at the Château de La Grange, which seemed to her further from the maddening crowd than it actually was. Her home has stayed practically in the state that it was when she dwelt there, and one cannot, without thinking of her, enter the round library packed with books, where she wrote the *Life of Madame la Duchesse d'Ayen* from her Olmütz notes, nor the neighbouring room which she occupied for eight years and which La Fayette, through conjugal piety, had walled up after her death.

It was to La Grange that, in 1802, George de La Fayette, who had borne himself bravely at the Battle of Mincio, brought his young bride, and

that in 1803 Father Carrichon blessed the marriage of Virginie with Louis de Lasteyrie. The whole family was frequently gathered at the château, and the gloomy old fortress of the Marshal de la Feuillade, with its five round towers, its flint walls, crenellated windows, and feudal drawbridge, awoke to life. There was nothing but laughter to be heard from the dining-room on the ground floor to the library and the bedrooms above. There was hunting in the woods, fishing on the moats, and trips to Rosoy, an imposing little town with its ramparts, or to the neighbouring village of Courpalay. The Marquise's three grandchildren played on the tree-surrounded lawn, whence a view can be obtained of the fertile plain of Brie.

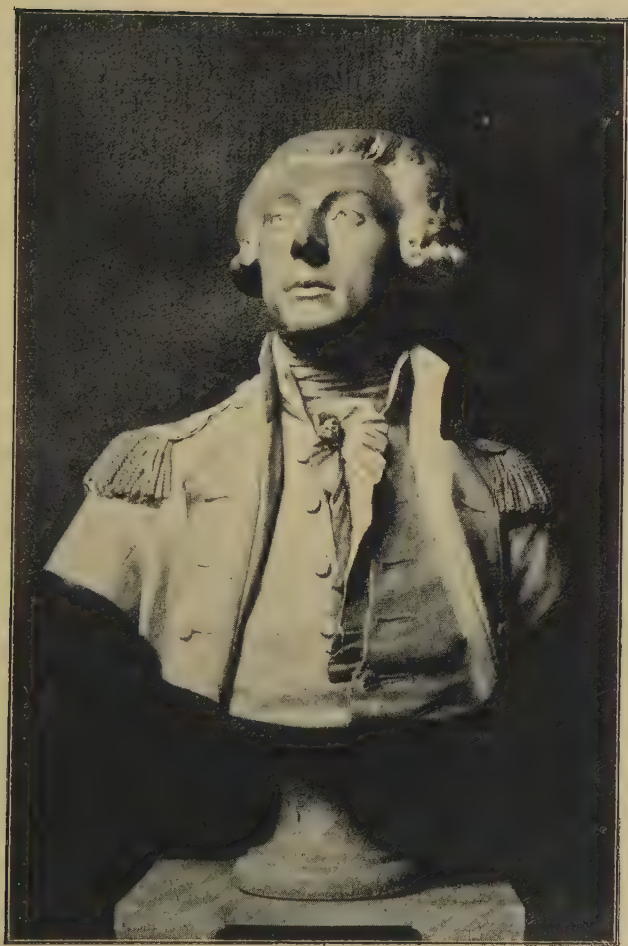
Meal-time brought every one into the paved dining-room, and afterwards all adjourned by the stone staircase to the big drawing-room, which was furnished without extravagance with rush-bottomed arm-chairs and chairs. La Fayette usually frequented the adjoining room called the "tower-room," where, seated in a monumental arm-chair of red velvet, he would play whist at a plain table and was never so happy as when he was partnered by Madame de Staël, Fitzpatrick, or General Fox, who came to see him in 1802 and planted the creeper which now covers the thick walls of the old château.

The Comte and Comtesse de Tessé made numerous stays at La Grange-Blesneau, as also Madame de Montagu, who busied herself with her sister in organizing the elementary school at Courpalay which they had founded at their mother's

request; but Madame de Grammont found difficulty in tearing herself away from her estates at Villersexel, where she acted the good angel to the poor. Madame de La Fayette went to Fontenay to see the Marquise de Montagu and to Aulnay in 1805, where Monsieur and Madame de Tessé gathered their nephews and nieces together on the occasion of their golden wedding. She twice went into Auvergne and stayed for a few weeks with her husband's old aunt. "Madame de Chavaniac," wrote Madame de Lasteyrie, "retained all her faculties in a loving heart." She did not die until May 6, 1811, aged ninety-two. Her greatest wish was to have the Chapel of Chavaniac raised to the standing of a Parish and the village to a Commune. This was realized, after Madame de La Fayette had taken the necessary steps towards its accomplishment.

George de La Fayette, although he had saved General Grouchy at Eylau, had no chance of advancement on account of his father, and the same state of affairs applied to Louis de Lasteyrie who was serving with the Grand Army. The two brothers-in-law handed in their resignations and arrived at La Grange in the month of September 1807.

The Marquise de La Fayette had been in a very bad state of health for several months. On August 22nd she had had violent pains and a high fever, followed by hæmorrhage and heart attacks, and had not since left her bed. She felt worn out in all her being, a deep and general lassitude. On October 11th, after hearing Mass in the Chapel



LA FAYETTE.
Marble bust by Houdon (1790).
(In Versailles Museum.)

of La Grange, she had been taken to Madame de Tessé's château of Aulnay, three leagues from Paris, and then, as her condition grew more serious, to her aunt's house in Paris, in the Rue d'Anjou-Saint-Honoré. She was very ill indeed and La Fayette, who was at Chavaniac with his aunt, returned in haste. Madame de Montagu also hurried back to Paris from Villersexel, where she had gone to see the Vicomtesse de Grammont.

Madame de La Fayette believed she was only suffering from a malignant fever, but it was unfortunately more than that after an illness lasting several years, since the dissolution of the blood was the most fatal symptom. She was attended by Corvisart, who, diagnosing a collapse occasioned by a recurrence of scurvy, did not hide his inability to save her. He could only delay her death and try to relieve the last moments of the sick woman who was delirious for a month. When her mind was wandering she recalled episodes of Sacred History and confused them with those in her own life. In her lucid moments she realized that she was dying.

"Good Heavens," she sighed once, "six more years of La Grange."

More often than not, she was calm and resigned.

"My state of health is spoiling your happiness," she said to her daughters who were by her, "but mine is in no degree diminished."

From time to time she would ask for her husband, gaze long at him, and say to him :

"How good you are to me, and how I have loved you !"

On December 20th she had several fainting fits. "On one of those last nights," wrote La Fayette, "there was something celestial in the way that she recited twice over the same hymn that she had sung to her daughters on sighting the towers of Olmütz. On the morning of December 24th she was extremely weak as she opened her eyes and said :

"This evening I shall see my mother."

During dinner she had La Fayette called, took his hand, and whispered :

"I am all yours !"

They were her last words. Her bed was drawn out to the middle of the room. On one side were Madame de Montagu and Alexis de Noailles, and on the other, George de La Fayette and his wife, Monsieur and Madame de Latour-Maubourg, and Madame de Lasteyrie, who was holding her newborn babe in her arms. Every one was kneeling and reciting the prayers for the dying. It was nearly midnight on Christmas Eve. The Marquise was breathing slowly, appeared not to be suffering, and was smiling. A quarter of an hour later she quietly passed away still holding her husband's hand in her own.

On the following Monday she was buried in the Picpus Cemetery close to the pit where, together with sixteen hundred other victims of the Terror, lay her mother, her sister, and her grandmother, guillotined on the 4th Thermidor.

*THE TRAGICAL END OF A
LOVE-MATCH:*

MADAME DE BELLESCIZE

I

SINCE THE TIME when the Comte d'Artois, who had fled from Versailles after the Capture of the Bastille, had left Belgium to take refuge with his father-in-law, the King of Sardinia, Turin had become the headquarters of a large number of French refugees. The first ones had arrived in the course of the autumn of 1789, all quite convinced that their "trip" would not be prolonged more than a few weeks, but the months had sped, the year 1790 had passed away in the feverish expectation of a call to arms, an uprising in Vendée or the march of Allied troops on the road to Paris. Alas, illusions were one by one dissipated, for every day fresh *émigrés* planted themselves in Savoy and Piedmont, and when on June 13, 1791, the Comte Baillard de Troussebois arrived at Turin with his daughter, the Italian people was no longer attempting to conceal its hostility and the nobility, who had welcomed the first refugees with enthusiasm, were beginning to weary of them.

Jean-Jacques Baillard des Combeaux, Lord of Chervil, was the son of Jean-Marcelin Baillard des Combeaux and of Louise-Madeleine de Troussebois, whose name he had been authorized to assume. He could trace the pedigree of his family, who were natives of the Vivarais, back to A.D. 1500.

Monsieur de Troussebois had been driven from France by the excesses of the Revolution and had made his way to Turin because he wished to request for his daughter Armande the continuance of a pension that the King of Sardinia—although there had been no arrears paid for two years—had formerly allowed to Madame Bigeard de Saint-Maurice, a natural daughter of the Prince de Carignan and maternal grandmother of Made-moiselle de Troussebois. Despite his request, or rather perhaps because in his penurious condition, Victor-Amadeus could not meet it, the Comte de Troussebois was received with much respect in Piedmont. He owed his welcome to his mor-ganatic relationship to the Carignans, to his long-standing friendship with Madame de Bourbon-Busset, one of the Comtesse d'Artois's ladies, but also to his name and his social rank. Descended from an old Languedoc family, the Baillards des Combeaux, the Comte had carried the sword like all his ancestors, and after a life spent entirely in the King's service had been nominated Field-Marshal on the eve of the Revolution. Born at the Château de Chervil in the Vivarais on March 9, 1740, the Comte de Troussebois was appointed lieutenant in the Prince's Regiment of Infantry. He was wounded and captured after the Battle of Rosbach and became Colonel at the age of thirty-five. The Corsican campaign brought him the rank of Brigadier, and he rose to be Field-Marshal on March 9, 1788.

A clever soldier and keen on his profession,

treating his men like himself, he had been "mentioned" by the Chevalier de Virieu and the Comte d'Herouville under whom he had served, but the habit of command had engendered pride, whilst camp life and constant dangers had dulled the sensibilities of this excellent officer, causing him to be a very bad husband. He had always lived apart from his wife, and when he had given up the command of the Regiment of Angoulême in order to avoid the new law of oaths, Madame de Troussebois had remained in Paris alone in her house in the Rue de Thorigny, whilst he had withdrawn his daughter Armande to one of his estates, the Château of La Mothe-Mourgon, near Cusset.

At La Mothe the Marshal had found his brother, the Chevalier de Chervil, a retired officer like himself, and one of his sisters, Mademoiselle des Combeaux, an old maid of settled habits. Consoling himself for his inaction as best he might, he hunted, raised pheasants, hawked along the banks of the Mourgon, a winding stream whose placid waters lapped the thick walls of the Château, fished in the Dupasse Pond, and attended to his domain. In the evening they played the violin and 'cello, or read, for there was an excellent library of 11,000 books on the third floor of the old Keep. Beside the Chevalier de Chervil's room, Troussebois had had a laboratory fitted up in which the two brothers spent many hours carrying out chemical experiments.

At such a period the duration of so placid

an existence could but be limited. Already on October 17, 1789, a gang of roughs had invaded the Château, where, pistol in hand, they visited every nook and cranny of the house from the cellar to the attics, opening the large buffets in the dining-room, nosing in the cupboards and table-drawers of the salon, and tapping the walls that were hung with tapestries and flowered cretonnes. These rogues would only consent to withdraw when they had been taken everywhere, to the kitchen and the bedrooms, the vaulted chapel, the thatched barns, store-houses, and mill.

Search parties succeeded each other at intervals at La Mothe-Mourgon, Troussebois received violent anonymous letters, threatening him with the guillotine, and every time he went to Magnet, Vicq, or Cusset, he was a mark for the insults of the rabble, especially at the latter place. One cannot tell all that he had to put up with. The Mayor of Magnet, a peasant unable to read or write, overloaded the Marshal with taxes, and even attempted to make him subscribe a second time to a patriotic fund ordered by the Assembly, under the pretext that Aristocrats should be made to pay for the past as well as the present. Thus Troussebois found himself ruined, and possessing a bare thousand crowns out of the 30,000 Livres income coming to him in 1789. He had been forced to cut down his household expenses, and refused to pay the exorbitant sum demanded of him, but convinced that his life was no longer secure at La Mothe-Mourgon, he made up his mind to travel abroad with his daughter.

Having served for over thirty years in the Army, and being a slave to military discipline, the Comte would never have dreamed of leaving France without authority from the Minister of War, so he accordingly applied for a passport and started for Turin immediately after its receipt. He had picked on that town because he intended to request both the deferred pension and a place in the Sardinian Army, and also, considering the number of his friends who were already settled there who might be of service to him, he trusted to find a good match for Armande in Piedmont. The nature of this Marshal "of the King's Camps and Armies" was such that, calling himself a philosopher and very loth to ask favours of the great, his whole life, like that of most of the nobility of his time, had been spent in hunting promotion, decorations, and everything that might tend to lift him above his fellows. Whatever good points he might have possessed, his vanity was extreme, and his intelligence was dimmed by pride to such an extent that he had never been able to forgive his mother-in-law, whilst helping himself to her vast wealth, for being so pig-headed as to insist on retaining the vulgar name of Bigeard when she had a right to that of Saint-Maurice.

On arrival at Turin with Armande and her tire-woman Jeannette, a devoted old servant who had never been separated from her employers and seemed to live but for them, Monsieur de Troussebois took up his residence right on the east of the town near the Pô Gate. He took a great deal of

pains with his daughter's education and directed her studies, for he was by way of being well-learned, but he went about things in a rough and very clumsy fashion. He was afraid of being over-indulgent and meted out his affection in proportion to his anxiety to devote himself to his task ; was too attentive, allowing no respite, forcing himself to a constant reserve and never unbending lest his authority be weakened. Armande was an obedient but rather gawky kind of girl, with the particular humility of children taken early from their mothers and brought up without much kindness. Small and thin, at sixteen she seemed but fourteen. A fragile child with auburn hair and big, blue eyes, she generally appeared cowed and shy, but at times her glance was veiled in sadness or shining with determination, and her features, despite their thinness, would become moulded into an expression of obstinate firmness.

Madame de Bourbon-Busset was taken with the girl's charming ways, liked to have her society, went frequently to see her and proffered her advice in her gentle way, extending to the motherless child the latent tenderness of the childless woman. She introduced her to the Comtesse d'Artois and took her to the balls given by the King of Sardinia in his palace. Armande de Troussebois went there in full dress, wearing the cross, scarf, and riband of the Canonesses. There could be few things less agreeable than attending these dull ceremonies, with their curtsies and solemn quadrilles conducted by a master of ceremonies, where only serving

officers and picked ladies danced, whilst the other ladies remained seated, awaiting the end of the ball to quit their state of immobility.

The principal amusement during the day was to go out driving and salute one's acquaintances to right and left. Once a week, the Comtesse d'Artois received the ladies of both nations, and Madame de Busset, being in charge of the introductions, assisted her mistress with a few French ladies, amongst whom was Mademoiselle de Troussebois.

The girl could scarcely be expected to take much pleasure at those meetings where all was subordinated to etiquette in all its embarrassing forms, but she was so naturally simple and graceful that she was soon loved and esteemed by the whole town, and that the Comtesse d'Artois expressed the desire to attach her to her person.

When Carnival time arrived, Turin assumed a completely different aspect and became indeed the gayest town in Europe. It was nothing but suppers, spectacles, and masquerades. There was Opera almost every day, and no evening show that did not last till dawning. Once a week Pierrots and Pierettes, Harlequins and Dominos, gathered to dance at the Carignan Theatre, where inclinations that must be restrained at the Court could be more openly followed. The Carnival custom of discarding husbands, which no one thought either ridiculous or unusual, was followed. It was a case of every lass to her lover, and never had there been seen a finer Love Fair where Harlequin and

Pierrot vied for the hearts of the fair Italians. As the Piedmontese gentlemen lacked gallantry, were somewhat crude and moreover accustomed to this Comedy of Love, they were easily supplanted by the Frenchmen, who took it seriously. "Our people," remarked King Victor-Amadeus, "will be thrown off their balance." His female subjects were indeed, but made no complaint.

Armande de Troussebois was present at several of these balls where her originality of beauty, the sweetness of her expression that pleasure accentuated under her velvet mask, her gaiety and good humour, brought her homage and compliments. Morally and physically youthful and simple, her innocent grace and freshness were charming. She knew she was thought pretty and was glad to hear it said, but she was quite ignorant of life and did not perceive that there was anything factitious in the liaisons of the Celadons and Clelias, whose gallant talk she heard and whose wit she admired. As she was repeatedly being told that she was loved, she began to consider herself in love too, and intoxicated by words murmured in her ear, she imagined herself to possess sentiments that she had not. In a very short space of time she passed through two love affairs, childish passions in which neither heart nor sense were affected but which uplifted and threw her into a dangerous state of emotion and made her believe that love was the sole object of her life.

Mademoiselle de Troussebois, left to herself and lacking the advice of a prudent and worldly

mother, might well have let herself be drawn into unhealthy intrigues in the society to which her father brought her, with its receptions where a superannuated politeness exaggerated or travestied sentiment, if a genuine and unreasoned love, deep and lasting, that had almost the character of enchantment, had not gained possession of her entire being, bursting upon her with such violence that she surrendered herself for ever with her first avowal. He to whom she had made the offer of her heart possessed no especial attractiveness, with his pock-marked face, thick eyebrows, and big black eyes that burned with a strangely restless and particularly sharp expression. He was a Frenchman of about thirty, lithe and strong, with sunburnt features, white teeth, and thick, red lips, named Charles Bruno de Regnauld-Alleman de Bellescize, who had been introduced into Court Society by the Chevalier de Lannoy, a second-grade major at Turin, an officer full of zeal, activity, and alertness enjoying especial consideration in the Sardinian Army, and belonging to a branch of the Regnauld family that had settled in Savoy in the seventeenth century. Charles de Bellescize was the son of a retired captain descended from a family whose nobility had been proved time and time again, and whose members, when they were not serving as soldiers, were councillors on the presidency or the seneschalcy of Lyons. It was in that town that he was born on October 8, 1762. He was sixteen when he entered the Royal Military College as a Cadet, and in 1780 was appointed

second-lieutenant in the La Rochefoucauld Regiment of Dragoons. It is not known what youthful failing compelled him to give up the career of arms, for his record merely states that his conduct did not give satisfaction. He then got himself entered as a law student, but being unable to get his degree, remained, the eldest of five children, on the hands of his old father, the Marquis de Bellescize, a retired captain in the Autichamp Regiment of Dragoons. The Marquis, a native of Chasselay, like all the Regnaulds, was greatly esteemed at Lyons, where he had been Provost of the Merchants from 1773 to 1776, but he was not well off. He only possessed a family estate in the Saône Valley whose income would certainly not have sufficed him if he had not supplemented it with his salary as Governor of Pierre-en-Cize, an old fortress overlooking Lyons that had been used as a prison for centuries. Moreover, this appointment had only been given to Captain Claude-Espérance de Regnauld-Alleman on October 1, 1784, eleven years after his retirement—a tardy recompense for the bravery he had displayed at the Sieges of Fribourg and Bergen-op-Zoom, where he had been wounded, and at the Battle of Crefeldt, where he had had two horses killed under him. The son of Luc de Regnauld-Alleman and Jeanne de Grolie, the Marquis de Bellescize had married, in 1761, Marie-Alix Millanois. Of this marriage were issue: Charles-Bruno, to whom this story refers; Jean-Laurent (1773-1840), from whom are descended the still existing members of

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the Bellescize family ; Marguerite-Hughes-Sophie (1764-1832), who married Charles-Felix Millanois (1744-1794) ; Anne-Sybil-Rosalie, married to Fardel de Verrey, and Jeanne-Claudine-Felicité, married to Etienne Masuyer (1751-1823) in the Year III.

The Marquis lived in the Château of Pierre-en-Cize, suffering from all sorts of ailments but devotedly loved by his wife, whose beauty had not faded with age, and surrounded with affection by his plucky daughters who, by their care and attention, endeavoured to make him forget the sorrows that had overwhelmed him for the last twenty years. What saddened the old man above all was the conduct of Charles-Bruno, his eldest son, and yet one could not help pitying, even if one dare not blame, this pleasant-mannered youth who, whatever might be said about him, had only been guilty of levity and had nothing worse against him. He was intelligent and anxious to get on, but lacked judgment and push. Thus his undertakings always came to nought despite his certainty each time of easily attaining his object. When he had retired—for until that time he had remained attached to his regiment, which only obliged him to attend certain summons but prevented him from leaving France—Charles de Bellescize decided to try his luck at commerce, and without asking anyone else's opinion on the matter, chose a definite line—English steel. Leaving Lyons in the month of October 1788, he had since been travelling in Italy, selling knives, keys,

padlocks, jewellery, and arms, thus satisfying his love of adventure and his hopes of profit. This new venture seems, indeed, to have attained no greater measure of success than his others, for Regnauld was even poorer than when he quitted France, but, quite content with himself and his lot, he made no complaint, daily dreaming of some scheme that should make him wealthy on the morrow.

Charles de Bellescize made the acquaintance of Armande de Troussebois through his cousin, Major de Lannoy, who was responsible for bringing him to the balls at the Casino and the Carignan Theatre. The girl fell in love, as women alone are capable of loving, with the broken lieutenant, the outcast who plied a vulgar trade to make a living. It seems, too, that she may have been attracted by the mystery of his irregular existence, and that her tenderness increased when she mused on the sufferings of one whom ill-fortune had ceaselessly and relentlessly pursued. The young couple scarcely saw each other except at the Casino or the Carignan Theatre, but there they could talk with the facility permitted to every one, and, as one might guess, they very soon plighted their troth and began to form plans for a speedy and happy union.

Troussebois, just as he had thrown himself heart and soul into the task he had set himself, had also been busy over the business of getting his daughter married. His carefully-laid plots had at last attained their object, and Armande's hand had been asked by the Comte d'Harcourt, a French refugee, who was twenty-one, possessor of a pleasant

face, a good figure, and bearer of one of the finest names in France. Monsieur de Troussebois had succeeded beyond his fondest hopes, and his sorrow at having no son was quite forgotten in the exuberance of his joy at shortly seeing the green palms of his shield united to the glorious quarterings of the d'Harcourts.

As was quite the custom in those days, the Field-Marshal had neglected to either consult or warn Armande of the measure he was contemplating concerning her, and when eventually she was advised of the designs her father was making, she was up in arms at once. To her unforeseen refusal, Troussebois opposed the fire of his haughty wrath, reproaching the maid for her lightness and commanded her obedience, but her character was far more obstinate and firm than she had been given credit for, and asserting that her love for Bellescize transcended all else, she declared that she would never be wife to the Comte d'Harcourt. Her father, who had given his word, had no intention of pandering to all Armande's caprices, therefore he held out no hope to her, and even considered shutting her up in a convent, a punishment often meted out to intractable daughters, but did not venture to hold that threat over her in case the unfortunate girl might take it into her head to throw herself out of a window and kill herself. He preferred to wait, vowing that he would allow the rebel no more jaunts to the Casino, and decided, if her resistance were not to be overcome by any other means, that he would have her

taken to the frontier and write instructing Made-moiselle des Combeaux to come and fetch her.

Armande, after that cruel scene with her father, was overcome by a nervous breakdown that left her prostrate, with mind and body bruised. Scorning the sumptuous marriage offered her, she was determined to let herself die of hunger rather than be tied to the Comte d'Harcourt, and Troussebois found himself compelled to postpone his scheme of having her taken to the frontier, since she was really so ill that she would certainly not have been able to stand the fatigue of travelling. He did not, however, surrender to his daughter but waited, having no slightest doubt that in the end his will would overcome, as was generally the case, all obstacles that ventured to uplift themselves against it. His was a cold and precise nature, leaving nothing to chance and pursuing its purpose with indomitable energy. "Is it to be conceived," he wrote of himself, "that Monsieur de Troussebois should change his principles and not be the same now as he has always been? I have surely given proofs enough to the contrary!" He had therefore fixed the date on which the Comte d'Harcourt should have the honour of becoming his son-in-law without troubling himself further about his daughter's pain and the love she bore for Regnauld. He would have preferred a thousand times to see her dead than married to such a creature. What counted with him the heroic career of the old Marquis de Bellescize, a gentleman whose whole life had been devoted to the service of his King,

the ancient nobility and alliances of the Regnauld family and the consideration they enjoyed at Lyons? So far as he was concerned, Charles de Bellescize was an outcast and a vagabond who would not be beyond making use of a wealthy marriage to drag himself from the state of misery and decadence into which idleness and waste had thrown him.

Such an opinion of the young man was a great error of judgment on Troussebois's part. Certainly, considering the period he lived in, he had tarnished the golden lozenges of his shield and profaned its motto, *Non mutor*, by adopting a commerce that, despite his birth, made him a chaffering trader below consideration; but it was with the praiseworthy object of working that he was selling steel, and that was in any case better than staying idle and useless at Pierre-en-Cise. Moreover, if maybe in the early days of his courtship Charles de Bellescize had given a mean thought to the advantages of every kind that might accrue from an alliance with the Troussebois family, he had soon cast such unworthy ideas from him. He also was in love, and taking no account of vanity or ambition, was to prove the disinterestedness of his love in the long run, but appearances were against him; and all those who were acquainted with the facts of the case, the girl's inclination and her refusal to marry the Comte d'Harcourt, were against the pair, even Jeannette, the old tirewoman, who, prudent and greedy peasant as she was, could not understand her pretty young mistress's rejection of

the best *partie* in the town and her favouring of an adventurer without a red cent to his name. Thus no one in Mademoiselle de Troussebois' circle of acquaintances helped her to bear the aching of her heart, and she would have given herself up to despair had she not discovered in her Piedmontese chambermaid a prudent and complaisant confidant, and if Madame de Bourbon-Busset had not put herself out by coming to see her almost every day. The good Comtesse looked on her as her own child, paid her a great deal of attention, and endeavoured to calm her fever. She exhorted her to patience and doubtless held out before her eyes the hope that Monsieur de Troussebois would give way in the end, if Fortune, who favours lovers, did not first assist her to become united to the man she loved.

The days passed, the month of May had already arrived, and Armande viewed with terror the closeness of the date that her pitiless father had fixed for her marriage, when the Comte d'Harcourt fell seriously ill. The Marshal's chagrin can easily be imagined, for this mischance upset all his designs. He was to leave Turin the day following the marriage, for his funds would not last him much longer, and the Municipality of Cusset having caused the sequestration of his property, he was vastly anxious to get back to France to justify himself little by little for his flight. On May 2nd he had written to Ducray, his farmer at La Mothe-Mourgon, to send him a horse and servant to Briançon, but he was now obliged to countermand this order, charge his brother Chervil with his

interests at Cusset and against his intentions, prolong his stay in Piedmont. His determination not to accept Bellescize as his son-in-law grew intenser as a result, and he decided, if the Comte d'Harcourt did not recover, to present other suitors to Armande, the most eligible, not only in the town, but in all the States of the King of Sardinia who had shown any kind of attention to her.

Armande, on learning that her marriage was deferred, let herself be carried away by the hope that it would never take place ; and as her father, considering it " bad form " to fix up fresh engagements under the very eyes of one who had not broken off the old, spoke of many Sardinian gentlemen without definitely picking one, she hoped for much from Time, abandoned herself to the sweetness of uncertainty, showed herself altogether more docile, and appeared resigned. Troussebois, seeing her calmer and having no inkling of her thoughts, considered her beaten. Although he was quite satisfied that his fresh schemes were well on the road to success, still, despite the consideration and respect he enjoyed from the Royal Family of Savoy, who carried their kindness to the point of several times enquiring after his daughter's health, he felt he could not stay much longer at Turin whence Victor-Amadeus III was ordering the departure of all refugees who were not serving in his armies. Besides, the new Chargé d'Affaires, not having been received at the Court of Sardinia, relations between the two countries were severed, which meant that the Chevalier de

Chervil could no longer send any money to his brother, nor the Comtesse de Troussebois to her husband. The Comte saw his resources fading away and the time approaching when the wolf would be knocking on the door, as the old saying goes. He was not one of those who hesitate before making a decision, and as the Comte d'Harcourt's doctors predicted his early recovery, he began to make his preparations for returning to France, not without informing his daughter of his intention to marry her, before he left Turin and in three weeks at the latest, to the man he had chosen for her. She accepted his fiat with more docility than he expected, but he failed altogether to notice in the submissive eyes and under the drooping mouth of the little invalid the secret hope of an expected happiness. He was making his last preparations full of happiness at returning to his own country and re-entering into possession of his property and at having beaten Armande's childish obstinacy, when one morning, a couple of days before the marriage was due to be celebrated, he learned that the girl had disappeared.

Troussebois was at first overwhelmed by the news, then, like a strong man whom emotions had thrown off his balance, he became irritated and could not make up his mind to believe what he was told. He himself searched all over the empty house which was now as silent as though it were deserted or in mourning, then went out and made enquiries, after which he could no longer doubt that his unfortunate child had been seduced by the

artifices of an infamous ravisher. It was at night, between two and three o'clock in the morning, that she had made her escape, leaving with "her vixen of a chambermaid" who had taken her to her brother's, a hairdresser in a neighbouring shop, where Bellescize had been in waiting since the evening before. There they had remained until the first glimmerings of dawn, when they had embarked in a small boat on the Pô, which passed by the very door. Bellescize had taken his servant, and Armande the faithful Piedmontese who had assisted her to elope, and after all four had gone about half a league down the river, they had landed and made off, but no one knew in which direction.

The Comte did not long remain overwhelmed by grief, for he had learned to appraise things at their proper value and not to depend on other people for his welfare, but annoyed at having been made a fool of, he accused everyone, then continued his search and questioned his friends. In order to get away, Bellescize, who was without the necessary funds, had had to borrow two hundred Livres from his cousin, Major de Lannoy, one hundred and fifty Livres from Monsieur de Serent, on the pretext of going to join the Princes' Army at Coblenz, and thirty Livres from his servant. Armande had carried off a few personal possessions and the Canoness' Cross which the Abbé de Pinet had given her, but which, when she tried to sell it, did not bring in very much. With so little money they could not get very far, and, moreover, it was

believed it was a man in black but not a priest who had gone through the formalities of marrying the young people, which permitted Monsieur de Troussebois to attack Regnauld under the Criminal Law. He went to the police with his complaint, gave a description of the young man who was wearing a cloth coat of a light olive colour, and decided to set out himself on the track of the fugitives. "What else could I do under such circumstances?" he wrote. "Was it not my duty to run to earth one who had just outraged me in such an atrocious way? Ought I not to make every effort to prevent the consummation of such an abominable union and demand the most striking revenge? All those duties were imposed on me by Nature; my heart urged me to carry them out, and I could not have refused without being guilty in my own eyes of the most criminal indifference!"

His indignation was certainly just, and his best plan seemed indeed to try and overtake the young couple, but Troussebois's first and immediate necessity was to raise the necessary funds for the journey. This detail did not embarrass him in the slightest. Visiting a merchant who was one of his friends, he handed him a draft on Monsieur Fournier, payable at three months on a banker in Paris, and borrowed from him 1,440 Livres. "I am doing all I can," wrote he, "happen what may." Then, furnished with a passport that he obtained from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he left Turin, and travelled through the Milanais and part of Italy. It was a

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wild-geese chase, for what he most dreaded had happened : a public official and an impious priest had lent their services to a union whose first knots had been tied under the auspices of crime and seduction.

It was on July 11th, in the wretched old church at Langasco, a tiny peasant hamlet, situated to the east of Comporna, that the "Illustrious Comte Charles de Regnaud-Bellescize, son of the Marquis Claude-Espérance of the Town of Lyons, Kingdom of Gaul, and the Comtesse Louise-Victorie-Amedée-Armande, daughter of the Comte Jean-Jacques de Troussebois of Lutetia of the Parisians . . . contracted marriage between them . . . in the presence of . . . Joseph Grondona, curate-in-charge of the parish church of Saint-Cyr of Langasco, Diocese of Genoa . . ." The ordinary proclamations were omitted, but there were two witnesses, François and Joseph Berra of the town of Chieri and a notary, Etienne Grondona, who signed their names on the parish register, and Monsignor Schiaffino, Vicar-General of Genoa, had noted his approval by setting his seal on the deed. "The deed is consummated," wrote Troussebois. In spite of all his efforts, his daughter had become the lawful wife of Bellescize. He was "grievously punished, wounded in his pride, and struck the most cruel blow that a father's heart can possibly experience." Unable to do any more, daring neither to return to Turin nor re-enter France, he remained at Milan to hide his shame and grief.

Armande had only made her mind up to escape

two days before that on which she would have been forced to marry the Comte d'Harcourt. Had her father, instead of putting on his mask of cast-iron inflexibility, given her even a little hope, she would have behaved differently, but it was no longer possible for her to bear her sufferings, she was too deeply in love, every one had failed her, and she was worried to death at the thought that Bellescize might be capable of abandoning her. She went off without reflecting on the consequences of her action and had no sooner crossed the threshold of the house than she regretted what she had done. She wept, pleaded, reproached herself over and over again, and asked to be taken back to her family. Dread of the convent, and worse, fear of being for ever separated from her husband, kept her with him, but in spite of her joy at having given herself freely, and the secret pride she felt at having shaken off the yoke that was nearly thrust upon her, remorse pursued her "into the arms of him she had chosen, and her present desire was that her fault should be forgiven. She resolved to write to the old Marquis and the Marquise de Bellescize, calling them her father and mother, acknowledging her errors, and even exaggerating them in order to justify her husband. She received no reply. "We do not know the laws of your country on marriages of this kind," wrote Madame de Bellescize to her cousin, Major de Lannoy, "but the dictates of honour tell us that we may only allow ourselves the sweet names of father and mother in connection with Mademoiselle de T——

with her father's approval." The excellent woman made one advance after another to obtain a "general pardon" from the Comte de Troussebois. "Oh! my dear Cousin," she wrote to Monsieur de Lannoy, "if my son were the only sufferer . . . I should not dare permit myself to ask you to solicit and have solicited forgiveness for him, but his father . . . would not long survive the idea that his son is the cause of misfortune to a young lady and her family." She directed another letter to Monsieur de Chateigner, who, "very interested in the fate of Armande and her husband," interceded with Monsieur de Troussebois "in their favour." Already Madame de Bourbon-Busset had besought the pardon of her little friend: "I am very far from the thought of venturing to give you advice," she wrote to the Marshal. "I cannot, however, refrain from repeating to you, Monsieur, that your sorrow can only be alleviated by allowing the object that has caused it to be reunited to you."

Troussebois remained adamant to these prayers. "I am not the man," he wrote to his wife, "to let myself be soothed by fine sentences. I want deeds and not words, although I am well aware that anything can be put on paper." The deeds he required, although he had given Monsieur de Chateigner to understand that he was unwilling to receive his daughter, were Armande's submission, and that she should forsake her husband and return alone and repentant to her father. The young wife could not bring herself to such a sacrifice, but

she wrote the following touching letter to her father :

I am throwing myself at your feet, my dear Father. Ah ! I beg of you, do not refuse me pardon, forgive your daughter. She only asks for a return of your tenderness towards her ; assure her that she will get it, that you will see her again with your usual kindness. Ah ! You may be sure that she will lack no happiness, but forgive my husband as well. My dear Father, I cannot believe that the being who has caused, and must always cause, me happiness can be disagreeable to you. If I had not taken the step that has, I know, made me so guilty in your eyes, I have already told you, and it is indeed true, my dear Father, that you would soon have had no daughter in this world. In spite of all my faults, you still love me, do you not, my dear Father ? It would pain me too much to think otherwise. Well, love my husband as well ! Look upon him as your son ! I beg of you, forgive the sorrow we have caused you, and be sure that you will never have cause to complain of us, but, on the contrary, we will do all we can to promote or at least contribute to your happiness !

Tell me, my dear Father, what I must hope for or fear. I await with the greatest impatience the moment when I shall myself be able to assure you how sorry I am to have caused you such distress, but please, then, do not refuse to see my husband. It is with the feeling of the most tender and respectful attachment that I sign myself, my dear Father,

Your most obedient servant and child,

DE BELLESCIZE, *née* DE TROUSSEBOIS.

When the Comte received this letter, he had somewhat altered his first resolution, which was to never see his daughter again, but he closed the violent reply in which he overwhelmed her with reproaches by these cruel and cutting words :

As to the request you make me to see your husband, you may rest assured that I shall see him with pleasure when there shall have taken place in me so great a change that I shall no longer

take into account the dictates of honour, despising virtue and honest actions to only esteem the reverse, and when finally I shall have learned how a man who betrays at once both friendship and the accepted usages of Society to commit, in cold blood and of premeditation, the most detestable crime, can become an estimable man in the eyes of honest folk. Until then, I advise him, and he will do well, not to present himself before me.

Armande made no reply, for she would have been contemptible in her own eyes if she had abandoned her husband, nor would she have had the courage to do it. She was so much in love with him that she wept when he left her for a few hours. That love she cherished more than regret for her fault, and even the material distress she was compelled to exist in only served to increase her tenderness to him for whom she had sacrificed all. The few Livres brought from Turin had soon been exhausted and the young couple, in spite of the assistance of Monsieur de Semonville, our Envoy Extraordinary to the Republic of Genoa, were finding life very difficult. Armande bore her share of their trouble without complaining, and her husband cudgelled his brains to find some way out of their penury. Thus it came about that, being like all to whom Fate has been unkind, dissatisfied with men and their institutions, he attempted the translation into Italian of the *Rights of Man* and various other revolutionary documents, so as to make money, but it seems evident that the Genoese were not greatly attracted by that class of literature, for the scheme failed. Thereupon Bellescize, whom the expedient had not relieved financially, asked Armande to return to France,

but she could not make up her mind to that, always thinking and hoping that her father would summon her back to Turin with her husband. Charles, however, insisted. They would make their way to Lyons, where the Marquis de Bellescize would not refuse to shelter them; and if the worst came to the worst, he would seek work from his sister, whose husband, Millanois, owned an important printing-works in the Rue Grenette. They might go and find her aunt des Combeaux at La Mothe, Madame de Troussebois and Madame de Saint-Maurice at Paris, and attempt to get forgiven and received by them. Armande hesitated about agreeing, for to her it seemed odious to expose their state of misery, and thus admit failure to those who had tried to turn her from the adventure of an elopement.

In the meantime, the Convention was passing new laws against the refugees, and the delay accorded to all those outside their own country had expired. Bellescize's absence might involve the rest of his family in peril, and it was therefore necessary to get back to France as early as possible. When Monsieur de Semonville added his weight to Regnauld's pleading, Armande ceased resisting, banished all the presentiments and doubts that assailed her, and resolving to follow "her beloved husband" wherever he might care to take her, left Genoa in the first week of September 1792.

II

WHEN ARMANDE and her husband arrived at Lyons, the clouds of rebellion were hanging over the old City of Toil, the guillotine had been erected on the Place Bellecour, massacres had taken place in the prisons, and it was by a sheer miracle that Bellescize's father, mother, and youngest sister had been spared when the Castle of Pierre-en-Cise, where they lived, had been stormed by the rabble on September 9, 1792.

The Castle had been the scene of many horrible dramas during the centuries since its high and massive walls had been set up on top of a steep rock overlooking Lyons, but for a long time, in contradiction of its formidable appearance, it had become, under the government of the Marquis de Bellescize, who delighted to receive his friends there, nothing more than an easy-disciplined house of detention for better-class people—lunatics, debtors, or duellists—and in September 1792 there would only have been three prisoners, an old man in his dotage, a madman, and an abbé, if, a few weeks before, the Municipality of Lyons had not seen fit to imprison there, as being suspect of royalist sentiments, the officers of the 5th Cavalry, formerly known as the Regiment of Poland.

Following the massacres that had drenched Paris with blood, Chalier and Laussel, his accomplice, intending to consolidate their threatened power by terror, had profited by the fear the mysterious walls of the ancient fortress inspired in the common people to lead them to the assault of the Bastille of Lyons and egg them on, to shouts of "Off with their heads!" to assassinate the officers of the Royal Poland Regiment. It was on the afternoon of September 9, 1792, that a band of cut-throats accompanied by drunken women had gathered together and escalated the steps hewn in the rock leading up from the Faubourg de Vaise to the Castle of Pierre-en-Cise. The garrison was composed only of thirty infantry soldiers, a lieutenant, and a sergeant, for Monsieur de Bellescize, the Governor, was confined to his bed with gout. A delegation was sent to him, but he resisted their demands, and as the delegates insisted on his allowing the assailants to enter, his daughter Felicité, aged twenty-four, went alone, and with the keys in her hand, planted herself before the gates of the fortress, declaring in a loud, firm voice that no one should enter without an order from the Mayor. She was elbowed, booed, and struck. One man crushed her foot with the butt of his musket, another stove in two of her ribs with a pike. Unheeding shouts and blows, she tied a handkerchief around her bleeding foot and still barred the entrance. The shrieking mob demanded the keys, but Felicité de Bellescize refused them, finally handing them over to the Mayor, telling

him that it was a sacred trust that she was confiding to him. The Mayor, however, would not or could not keep them, but threw them to the mob, who poured into the prison, invading the chapel, the lower hall, the hostelry, and eventually reaching the cell where the Governor had concealed the officers of the Royal Poland Regiment. There were nine of them. One alone succeeded in escaping, five were murdered on the spot, and their heads, cut off and hoisted on pikes, were carried in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. During the march, one of the three officers who had been spared and were following as prisoners, eluding the vigilance of the executioners, threw himself into the Saône and was drowned. The two others were thereupon killed with pike-thrusts and rifle butts.

It was only in the evening, when the crowds had dispersed and night had fallen, that Major de Bellescize, with his plucky daughter and the wife who had remained with him through the dreadful scene, could leave the Castle and seek refuge in Lyons. This they found without any difficulty, for they were well liked in the town, but he was immediately, as well as the rest of his family, placed under the supervision of a national gendarme, who watched at their door.

One day that door opened, and Monsieur and Madame de Bellescize saw coming towards them, with outstretched arms, a girl whose thin body was covered with well-worn garments and whose pale face was lit up by eyes full of tenderness. It was their son's romantic wife, whose letters they had

left unanswered and who had come to beg their blessing and that they would receive her with her husband. The Marquise was kind and indulgent, something angelic about her commanded admiration and respect, and she affectionately welcomed the young couple and obtained from the Marquis, a dour but tender-hearted soldier, the forgiveness that the poor creatures had come so far to seek.

Her mother's heart was heavy when, seeing her son's destitution, she had to confess that she was unable to help him in any way, for she herself was without resources, she was prevented from going out, the old Governor of Pierre-en-Cise was still ill, had not drawn his pension for a long time, and the farmers on his estate at Chasselay had stopped paying their rents. Of Charles de Bellescize's two brothers-in-law, one of them, Fardel de Verrey, had emigrated, the other, Millanois, with whom he had counted on finding employment, had closed his printing-press, whilst his own younger brother, Laurent, was serving with the Army of the Princes at Coblenz. The elder's duty was to become the prop of the family, and in any case not to put a fresh load on it. Besides, it was scarcely possible for him to remain under his father's roof without imperilling his people, for although he had left France before 1789, he had returned from Turin and might be accused of being an *émigré*. His first step must be to obtain as soon as possible a certificate of citizenship and apply for it not at Lyons, where the name of Bellescize was suspect, but at Chasselay, where it was revered ; where

also Armande's husband might take refuge on his father's estate, and living quietly, might supply his own and his family's needs from the produce he could make off it.

He therefore left for Chasselay with his wife, arriving there in the first days of November. On the west side of the town, which had retained its Middle-Age appearance, with its ramparts, tall Gothic tower, and old streets lined with gabled houses, stood the château where Charles de Bellescize had spent a happy youth. Here for a few days he basked in the happiness of finding himself once more on the family estate, showing all his favourite spots to Armande. The two young folk forgot their sorrows, and like wealthy people who are not affected by cares for the morrow, they abandoned themselves to the sweetness of the present. Bellescize had been received with affectionate respect by the municipal officers of Chasselay who had all known him as a child, and some of whom felt a debt of gratitude towards his mother, who was so charitable and always ready to be of assistance. They did not hesitate to hand him a certificate justifying his absence, attesting his republican sentiments, and legalizing his marriage to Armande de Troussebois.

The young man had declared to Collonge, the Mayor, his intention of making his home at Chasselay and doing his service in the National Guard there, but whether it be that discussions on the point arose between him and his family or that he heard his name had been entered on the List

of Refugees and he felt no longer in safety, he soon returned to Lyons with his wife. There they learned of the early arrival of Monsieur de Troussebois. The Comte had lost no time in setting off in their pursuit. From Milan, where he had been apprised of their departure, he had dashed to Turin to spend a week in setting his affairs in order. Bad weather preventing his crossing the Saint-Bernard Pass; he had to go through Switzerland, and only reaching Geneva on November 12th, had had his passport visaged and at once set out for Lyons. Short of destroying himself, he would be quite capable of denouncing his daughter and son-in-law, and they, taking alarm at the possibility, fled in haste. By means of a broken-down cart they had found for hire they reached La Palisse in the hope of later going on to La Mothe-Mourgon and asking refuge from the Chevalier de Chervil and Mademoiselle des Combeaux, who lived there. Armande wrote to her aunt, an impetuous but kindly person, and to her uncle, a very devout man, but Troussebois, foreseeing their move, had checkmated it by writing to his brother first. Arriving at Lyons on November 15th, he had learned that his daughter had left that town in the "most contemptible and indecent sort of vehicle"; he was afraid "she might show her dishonour in a place where he had always enjoyed the greatest esteem and consideration," but, above all, he imagined that Bellescize would "attack him to get himself allotted the quarter of his property which he could claim under the new laws."

It seems that Troussebois was wrong in accusing his son-in-law of desiring to make against him claims that were, to say the least of it, scarcely honourable. In any case, if indeed he had given the matter thought, the young man did not persist in his design nor start any proceedings; and as neither the Chevalier de Chervil nor Mademoiselle des Combeaux had responded to their niece's appeal, Armande, rejected by her own relatives of whom she was too proud to beg any more, and daily more attached to her companion in misery, left with him for Paris, the one town in the world where it would be most easy for them to hide their distress, find food and live happily in the sweet solitude of their love.

The journey by coach from La Palisse to Paris took seven days and cost fifty Livres per person, but such expense seemed excessive to Bellescize, who, tending naturally even in little things to seek some profit, preferred to lay out a bigger sum on a horse and carriage in the hope of selling them on his arrival in Paris. Thus Armande, already suffering in those cold days of late autumn, but full of love and courage, crossed part of France in a cabriolet. She was alone with her husband, for at La Palisse, his servant and her maid, who had followed them until then, seeing that their masters had got nothing from their relatives and would be living in sad straits, had deserted them. The whole country was in the throes of Revolution. At the various stages of the route—Nevers, Cosne, Nemours, and Fontainebleau—the people were in

arms, patrols were passing, and towns and villages were groaning under the yoke of Committees of Public Security and National Agents of the Districts. Monsieur and Madame de Bellescize travelled along side by side, taking small heed of what was happening all around them. Their journey was long and painful, but their turn-out was so modest that they were not challenged. After a day's march, with backs aching from the bumps of the road, faces burned with the sharp wind, clothes soaked with rain and plastered with mud, they would put up, for reasons of economy, at the poorest hotel of the town where they were stopping. "Ah! that would seem different to the young wife from the splendid hotels at Turin where she was received!" was the cruel comment from Troussebois, who did not consider that Armande would have pined away in a gilded cage, and that now her eyes were filled with so much love that she saw only in rosy colours the wretched hovels where she could at night rest her head on her beloved's shoulder.

They arrived at Paris at the end of November 1792. It was Charles de Bellescize's first visit, and Armande, if she had stayed there for a few weeks each year, had never gone out alone and hardly knew any part of the town except the Quartier du Marais where her mother lived, which was naturally, as can well be imagined, where she least desired to take up her abode. Lost in the big city, without anyone to turn to, the young couple hired a modest room in a furnished house,

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the Hôtel de Bordeaux, in the Rue de Chartres. They had their names registered as Citizen and Citizeness Regnauld, and arranged with Coudray, the landlord, that the cost of their board and lodging should be ninety Livres per month. They must indeed, each of them, have been very ignorant of Paris to have chosen one of the most ill-reputed of all the twelve hundred furnished hotels that then existed. The Rue de Chartres, opened at the foundation of the Hôpital des Quinze-Vingt, connected the Rue Saint-Nicaise with the Rue Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre, where it opened out by the Château-d'Eau. This street was destroyed in 1852 at the opening of the present Place du Carrousel. It was well built, but the houses that comprised it were the resort of the lowest class of prostitute. Debauch was mistress of the street, spread itself everywhere, filled the hotels and impregnated the atmosphere with its corrupting smells.

In spite of her error that she was expiating so bitterly and the shame and ugliness of life that surrounded her, Armande was too pure not to live in voluntary ignorance of what was going on around her. Her husband occupied her every thought, and since she knew of no felicity comparable to that of living near him, she made no difficulty about coming into daily contact with vice and bearing her misery. She was penniless, but was the possessor of the most wonderful thing in existence, for all the love in the world filled her heart. The only thing that caused her a single worry was the fear of being turned out of her little

room. Coudray, the landlord, was not very often paid, and although, considering his profession, he was a decent sort of man, he was beginning to get tired of giving credit. Bellescize used to spend his day trying to find work, and would return in the evening worn out and on the verge of despair. Armande, like so many women who seem to stand the buffeting of adversity better than men, was admirable in her devotion and energy, listened with patience while her husband set out his plans for getting rich, refrained from dissipating the smoke of his dreams for fear of discouraging him, and relentlessly exhorted him to seek some manual labour that would keep them going till his schemes matured.

Unfortunately, there was a dearth of work of all sorts in Paris and the best workmen were reduced to taking a pick and shovel and going off to earn twenty sous a day on the roads at a time when a loaf of bread was costing eight. Bellescize had found nothing, but Armande, more fortunate, had met a dressmaker who had given her a few gowns to finish. The plucky little woman had thankfully taken on the ill-paid task, and sewed while waiting for her husband's return, or tidied up their quarters. The bill from Coudray, the landlord, has been preserved in our archives. There is mention made therein of a china bucket that the Comte de Troussebois's daughter, unused to heavy work, had doubtless let slip from her hands and was charged at eighteen Livres !

The terrible days passed in that black and

frightful misery that wears down the strongest of characters. In order to pay off some of their outstanding debt to Coudray, Armande took all that seemed superfluous to her to the pawnshop. The poor girl had only brought a small parcel of clothing and linen with her from Turin, and she was reduced to putting into pawn the little she had. One day she surrendered a dressing-jacket and two shawls, for which she received fifteen Livres, a pair of corsets she got three Livres for, and in that icy winter of 1793 she deprived herself for five Livres of a lambswool vest. She gave up everything—a blue cloth coat belonging to her husband, handkerchiefs, a bonnet, a petticoat, some lace, and the modest sums received in exchange for these sacrifices were paid to the landlord who, rarely receiving anything, showed himself parsimonious to the poor couple, who were obliged to go and beg for a ration of wood to warm themselves from the Supervision Committee of the Tuileries Section.

Although she was well aware what pain such a step would mean to her, Armande, who felt her poverty less than the paternal curse, and without regretting having taken a resolution whose consequences she lightly accepted, knew that she would only escape the remorse that overwhelmed her at certain hours, especially during her husband's absence, by obtaining his pardon, had made up her mind to go and see her mother. She needed all her courage not to draw back at the last moment before crossing the threshold of the house where she had spent the happy years of her childhood in

pure peace. It was right down in the Quartier du Marais, at the corner of the Rue de Thorigny and the Rue du Parc-Royal, that the Comtesse de Troussebois occupied a flat comprising several rooms—drawing-room, dining-room, boudoir, and three bedrooms, one of which was a girl's room, that had been shut up for months. Armande was received by her mother—the two women confessed to it afterwards—but their interview must have been a very painful one. Monsieur de Troussebois had returned to France and taken up his residence at the house in the Rue de Thorigny, but if he were absent at the time of Armande's visit, away on his estates in the Bourbonnais, he had given certain formal orders, and those orders no one dared disobey. The Comtesse de Troussebois could do nothing for her daughter, although she must without doubt have urged her to leave the adventurer who had carried her off and come back to her place in the home, but Armande could only repeat her refusal. She had given herself freely and was not a woman to go back on her word ; besides, she was in love and was ready to endure the worst kind of sufferings rather than give up her love.

She left without casting a look of regret on what she was leaving, but she had a tight feeling round her heart as she returned to the Hôtel de Bordeaux. How dear to her was the gloomy garret where she had been hiding herself for several months, but when alone during the daytime she had her moments of sadness and low spirits, when she

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would feel an indescribable melancholy come over her. At such times, she sat down and wrote to her husband, telling him in simple sentences, all the passion she felt for him. She set herself to carefully form her letters, decorated the capitals with arabesques, and surrounded the coarse paper with colour designs. Her labour of love over, she would get back to her work, finding her task now less painful, for her beloved's image was brought back very clearly before her eyes; and when Bellescize came in, she would sometimes, all rosy with blushes, hand him what she had written and had not had the courage to destroy, for, discovered in a red morocco portfolio belonging to the young man, was one of these frank love-letters that ran as follows :

For the most amiable,
The most charming and
The most adorable of husbands,

In order that the time may appear less long to me, my adorable little husband, I am going to write to you ; also I think it will not upset you to see that your little wife is always, always busied over you. Yes, dear good sweetheart, I really love you too much. I see that very well when I am not with you, and I am sad and all seems to be wrong ; for my little husband, it is not the same thing ; he can very well be without his little wife and maybe even does not think of her, but you must realize a little this too great love I have for you. Alas ! I feel that you cannot be always tied to my apron-strings, that would be rather tiresome for you, don't you think so, dear sweetheart ?

Adieu, I am saying too much foolishness, and it is better to finish. I wish now that you would soon come in.

Adieu, most adorable of husbands, look on me, I beg of you, as your most faithful and tender wife who adores you always.

Unlike his young wife, who found relief in revealing what was dearest to her heart, Charles de Bellescize seemed afraid of exposing his love, as though he felt himself unworthy of the one he inspired. He was tortured with remorse as he saw Armande's poor face paling through privation and her dear eyes surrounded with a halo of weariness. It was he who had introduced this girl to the wearing anxieties of poverty; for him she was working like a galley-slave, and on his account she was living in the dark garret of a furnished hotel. The tears she tried so hard to hide, but which reddened her eyelids; her misery, all, her very courage, brought him to the verge of despair. He suffered from the false situation he found himself in, would have wished to put aside the obstacles that obstructed the road where he had brought the woman he loved, and despite all his efforts he realized with grief that he was rather a burden to her than a help. His endeavours, daily renewed with constant persistence, all fell through, and in that Paris where he was unknown, where every one was thinking of insuring his own safety before considering the troubles of others, he was everywhere rebuffed. However, he was one of those whom adversity never succeeds in crushing, because in their ever restless mind there daily germinates some new idea that causes them to forget their sorrows while luring them on with hopes. In the evenings, when tired and discouraged—he did not dare to once more confess his failure—Armande would comfort him by telling

him of all her happiness at being near him, and he would valiantly sit down and start writing. He made out figures, drew plans and reckoned up profits, and what schemes he formed thus, in their little room at the Hôtel de Bordeaux, his forehead puckered in the lamplight, beside the wife he doted on ! What original ideas he conceived ! Of those ideas many were impracticable ; others would have attained success at a less troubled time. If he did not actually invent the aerial telegraph, he added improvements to Chappe's discovery, which the Deputy Romme, a mathematician, promised to speak of to the National Assembly. He was the very first to dream of founding a commercial house—the embryo of the big modern stores—where the public could procure goods of every description by passing their orders to that agency which, for a small commission, would have acted as go-between with the manufacturers. Romme was interested in this scheme. Circulars were issued, a catalogue was printed and distributed, but, alas ! at a moment when the Revolutionary Tribunal was starting, and the Committee of General Security was ordering the seizure of property and the imprisonment of persons, who could dream of buying anything at all ? The project fell through, leaving Bellescize where he was before, without any work or a daily wage.

One evening the young man, ever more prone to enthusiasm than despair, came back with good news. He had met Domergue, the grammarian, whom he had known in Lyons and who had

promised to get him some work in a printing-press. Domergue had not buoyed him with false hopes, for a few days later he was given some copy work to do. This was a livelihood assured, and thenceforth Coudray was paid, Armande was able to purchase a few necessities, and as the winter was coming to an end, economize on wood and oil.

She sewed beside Bellescize, who bent over his dry, uninteresting work all through the day and part of the night, but he had not abandoned his dreams of getting rich, and when his task was finished he would get busy on his commission business. He had taken as partner one of his compatriots, the Abbé Anselme Beaudevant. A former chaplain to the Duchesse d'Orleans, and deprived of any means of existence since the death of the Duc de Penthièvre, Beaudevant, who lived in the Rue Froidmanteau, near the Hôtel de Bordeaux, had been smitten with the young man's ideas and offered him his assistance. He was an old man of sixty with jovial face and small, grey eyes, had known the Marquis and Marquise de Bellescize at Lyons and grown fond of their son. Worldly wise and of a precise turn of mind, he reduced his partner's schemes to less vast but more practical proportions, and profited by the circulars that had been distributed to do a little business. There resulted therefrom for Armande and her husband a little more comfort, and since it was a season when patriotic gifts were the citizen's best safeguard, Bellescize offered to his Section, that of the Tuileries, the cabriolet he had brought from

La Palisse and had not yet been able to sell, and an *assignat* for twenty-five Livres, which brought him a civic mention. He was considered in his quarter as a good patriot, had given the oath, and had himself enrolled in the National Militia. He belonged to the 10th Company under Captain Poyet, and had mounted guard on several occasions, either at the Committee, the gates of the town, or at the Temple.

He thought by this means that he had put himself up a shield against the denunciations he dreaded, and as his copy work was regularly paid for, he was beginning to rejoice at being at last able to ensure to Armande, whose health was breaking up, the peace of mind that was so needful to her, when he learned with terror, on May 18th, that the Comte de Troussebois had been taken to the Committee of Public Security. Seals had been affixed to the doors of the flat in the Rue de Thorigny, where the Commissaries of the Revolutionary Committee of the *Fédérés* Section had presented themselves to arrest the former Marshal. The latter was not at home, but was discovered a few hours later at No. 26 Rue du Parvis-de-Notre-Dame, in the apartments where his brother, the Chevalier de Chervil, used to stay when he came to spend a few days at Paris. The Comte was accused of emigration and placed under the charge of a gendarme. Fearing to be implicated with his wife in this business, Bellescize went to present himself at the Police Commissariat of his section. He had brought the papers attesting his

patriotism, but Troussebois had addressed a memorandum to the Committee of Supervision of the National Assembly in which he endeavoured to justify himself for his emigration by laying the blame heavily on his son-in-law. Interrogated on June 10th, by the deputy Osselin and other members of the Committee, he spoke of Bellescize in very hard terms, accusing him to excuse himself. "If you will not recognize the justice of my cause," he concluded, "you shall at least learn all the shame of my persecutor."

In his extremity, Charles de Bellescize went to see his wife's grandmother and wrote her to exculpate himself of the calumny levelled at him, but even when Madame de Saint-Maurice had brought herself to approaching her son-in-law with regard to the matter, her efforts were in vain, and Troussebois never ceased invoking all the rigour of the law against the miserable seducer who had carried off his only daughter.

The result of his strange conduct was Armande's arrest, and despite the precarious state of her health, the unfortunate woman was brought before the Committee of General Security to be questioned on August 18th. The Commissary of Police of the Tuileries Section was dispatched to the Hôtel de Bordeaux and conducted a search in "Citizen Raignaud's room," but it was realized that it was "in error that the name of the Citizeness Raignaud-Bellescize had been inserted in a warrant that ordered the search for suspect papers at Citizen Raignaud's," and concluded "that there were no

suspect papers at Citizen Raignaud-Bellescize's, but, on the contrary, all were in perfect order and in accordance with the Revolutionary spirit." In consequence, on August 19th, the Committee, "after having examined the papers . . . none of which could be held to inculcate either the Citizen Raignaud or his wife, withdrew its warrant of the day before . . . and ordered that the said Citizeness Raignaud should be immediately set at liberty."

Thus the Comte de Troussebois's odious accusations did not produce the result he seemed to expect of them, but Bellescize and his wife lived in constant anxiety, expecting at any moment to be denounced and their persons seized. The fact was, that notwithstanding the evidence they had made use of, and the certificates of citizenship which had been issued to them, they had returned to France after the period of grace prescribed by the law of October 23, 1792, had elapsed, and that law, as is well known, made the offence of emigration punishable by death. The letters that Troussebois had written from Turin to his brother Chervil established without equivocation that Armande and Charles de Bellescize, living in their sweet dream of love, had not left Genoa until several days after the date fixed by the National Convention. These letters had just been seized at Cusset, where the Chevalier de Chervil had been so clumsy as to get himself arrested. An impenitent Royalist and fervent Catholic, he used to go every morning to ask for the public papers from Madame Moulin, the confidential secretary of the local postmaster, "in

order to know," as he said in a loud voice, "whether this nonsense would soon finish." One day when he was in Bernard the bookseller's at the same time as several notorious *sans-culottes*—Amelot the health officer, Durand the schoolmaster, and Mativet the innkeeper—he had given tongue to his counter-revolutionary sentiments and a violent discussion had ensued with his opponents. No time was lost in denouncing him, and a search having been ordered in the house he was occupying at Cusset, the whole of the correspondence between the two brothers was brought to light. Chervil had been confined to his house under the charge of a gendarme; and two months later, on October 13, 1793, a warrant of the Committee of General Security ordered that he should be brought to Paris to attend before the Revolutionary Tribunal; whilst his sister, Mademoiselle des Combeaux, was imprisoned in the old Carmelite Convent at Moulins, an "intolerable place" where the very food was wretched. Monsieur de Troussebois had already been shut up in the Abbaye on September 18th, and a warrant had been issued against the former marshal's wife and mother-in-law.

Bellescize had concealed these various arrests from Armande but, although the Abbé Beaudevant tried to cure him of his anxiety, he had decided, in order to not be again exposed to unpleasant surprises that his wife's weak state of health would not stand, to find protection from the searches that might ensue from his father-in-law's complaints. To this end he went to see Domergue, told him

what was happening, and asked for his assistance. The man of letters had not lost interest in his protégés but, living amongst his books, and being little acquainted with the world, he was not in a position to do much to help them himself. He took Bellescize to the house of Madame Granjean, one of his friends, whom he knew to have relations with several members of the National Convention. This lady had made a journey to Lyons in 1790, where she had visited the Castle of Pierre-en-Cise and felt a debt of gratitude to the Major for the welcome she had received. She had been shown all over the old fortress by Felicité de Bellescize, and the intelligent and vivid personality of the girl, whose heroic conduct she had learned of later had impressed itself deeply on her mind. Regnauld had no sooner been brought into her presence than she thought she saw in him the likeness of "someone who was not unknown to her," and when he told her his name and related all his misfortunes to her, she promised to do for him all that lay in her power. She endeavoured, in effect, to "move some deputies in favour of the young couple . . . but they were frightened at the idea of compromising themselves and stifled any feelings of humanity they still felt in their hearts. They blamed neither the abduction nor the marriage contracted against the parents' will, but it must be confessed that the young people belonged to a certain class of society and nothing could excuse that offence."

The protection of Madame Granjean, a letter which Josephine de Beauharnais wrote to Fouquier-

Tinville, perhaps mysterious influences or forgetfulness, were the cause of the voluminous *dossier* drawn up against the Troussebois family being shelved for four months—four terribly long months during which Bellescize endured the gnawings of fear and remorse. But if there is one single reproach that cannot justly be levelled against the Public Prosecutor of the Revolutionary Tribunal, it is of having failed in his homicidal task through indolence. He “strained like an ox in his furrow,” never for a moment ceased his recriminations against the disorder in government offices and, with fierce and untiring energy, repaired the negligence—often voluntary—of his clerks.

One evening in the month of January 1794, as Bellescize and his wife, walking arm-in-arm through the snow that was falling in heavy flakes and covering the silent streets, arrived at the entrance to the Rue de Chartres, they caught sight of their landlord, Coudray, coming towards them, making them signals not to come any further. The worthy man approached under cover of the wall and informed them in low tones that gendarmes were waiting for them in their room. He had come to warn them, at risk of his own life, to get away as soon as possible. The couple thanked him with effusion, and retraced their steps slowly at first so as not to give the alarm, but a little later, on seeing that their manœuvre was not discovered, they started running over the slippery snow, feeling that every yard was taking them farther from the accursed house where, failing Coudray’s devotion,

they would have been arrested and separated from each other, only to be brought before the Tribunal of Blood a few days later. To save Armande, find her a sure refuge at the earliest possible moment, for her strength was giving out, was the sole thought that ran through Bellescize's mind, but he was at a loss whom to entrust her to. Remembering with what kindness he had been received by Madame Granjean, he decided to go there and beg her to find him some hiding-place. Telling his companion of his scheme, and assuring her that they would not be turned away, he encouraged her to keep on walking, and supported her as far as the residence of Domergue's friend. He went in first, "throwing wild glances around him," wrote Madame Granjean, "and saw I was alone, but from his scared looks one might have thought that the very walls inspired him with mistrust. Vanishing into the antechamber with the same speed, he returned a little calmer, leading by the hand a young woman all covered with snow, whose tottering steps and complete air of collapse alarmed me.

" 'This is Armande,' he announced, pushing her gently in my direction. 'She has no hope left in this world save in your kindness. I beg you to overlook the circumstances in which I am compelled to present her to you for the first time.'

"I rushed towards her, embraced her, pressed her to my bosom, seated her by the fire, and brought her some food, for she had had nothing to eat since the morning. I sent away my servant, for since the outbreak of the Terror I had taken

the precaution of employing one who did not sleep in the house.

“Whilst Armande, numbed by cold and emotion, was warming her snow-chilled feet and finishing her repast, Bellescize signalled to Madame Granjean that he would like to speak to her privately. Accompanying her into the next room, he informed her that since he had seen her last, the whole Troussebois family had been thrown into prison, his own place of residence had been discovered, and had their worthy landlord not come to warn them, he and his wife would have been arrested that very evening.

“‘Armande,’ added he, ‘is in ignorance of her parents’ fate. I have kept that from her, for she would be reproaching herself for having brought them to the scaffold, and would not be able to bear the weight of her remorse. She knows the danger we are in, and has come with me to ask you to save us by affording us shelter for to-night.’

“‘Alas! This is no sure shelter, and besides, have I the right to risk the lives of two people with me here? What is more to the point, my porters are revolutionist . . .’

“‘They did not see us come in,’ interrupted Bellescize, ‘and my name is unknown to them. To-morrow I will find somewhere else.’”

Madame Granjean had not the courage to resist the young man’s pleading and agreed with him to keep Armande only until the following day, but when it became necessary to announce this decision to the unfortunate girl, she flung her arms around

her husband's neck, protesting that she would not leave him, that she was ready to die with him, but that she could not let him go. When she came to realize that their protectress was already compromising herself by keeping her at her house, and could not shelter both of them without exposing them to complete separation, she allowed Bellescize to go, but not before making him promise to return the next day and beseeching Heaven to watch over him. She wept for a long time after his departure, forcing herself to reply to the kindly questions put to her, but thinking only of the man who was leaving her for the first time and for whom she had given up everything. Madame Granjean, finding it impossible to comfort her protégée, went to put up a camp bed, and then fetching Armande and persuading her to lie down, she recommended her to get up early so that no one, especially the servant, should notice that she had spent the night there.

By daybreak, in effect, all had been put back in order. "Judge then of my astonishment," wrote Madame Granjean, "when my servant told me on coming in that I ought to have warned the porters that I was keeping someone with me, as they had waited up until two o'clock in the morning, knowing that the gentleman who had brought the lady had left alone. It was better not to try any hiding tricks, she added, as everything that went on was public property."

"The wisest course was not to make any reply, but I must confess that that day seemed as long to

me as it did to Armande. We both impatiently awaited nightfall, and the reproaches she levelled at her family for their harsh treatment of her drove me to inform her of their imprisonment. This news saddened her very much, her tears flowed more abundantly but less bitterly, and she regained hope of being still loved by her relatives and of winning their forgiveness."

"As eight o'clock struck, Bellescize came in very tired, having spent the night on a staircase, and vainly begged all his friends during the day to take care of his wife."

"‘Fear has frozen every heart,’ he said, ‘and closed them to pity. The very mention of our name now terrifies people and brings a picture of the scaffold before their eyes. I am still hoping to find a refuge somewhere to-morrow.’"

"I told him that, after what had happened, a longer stay in my house would destroy me without saving either of them, and did not conceal my fears from him."

"‘Ah!’ exclaimed Armande. ‘What is the use of talking about it? We cannot go on struggling against our fate, and I would prefer death a thousand times to the agony I have been suffering since yesterday. It is far better to suffer together, for I feel my courage ebbing, and I have no desire to leave you again!’"

Bellescize became desperate on seeing his young wife desiring the end of her existence in the spring-time of her life. He tried to instil in her trust in the future. It was for her that he was frightened,

and her that he was trying to save from the torture of appearing before the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Each of the pair was reproaching himself for the danger that threatened the other, and was ready to sacrifice himself in order to save the other." Madame Granjean could not witness such a scene without being moved to tears and saying :

"I will expose myself once more, and may Heaven protect me !"

She advised Bellescize to try and escape and entrust his wife, who was too weak to follow him, to the care of a young dressmaker, Mademoiselle D——, in whom she had perfect confidence, but Armande objected with all the energy of despair, exclaiming :

"Can you really harbour the thought of parting from me and leaving me, knowing that I have only you and that your affection barely suffices to smother my remorse? What could be worse for us both than separation? If it is your own safety that drives you to such a decision, consider that the day you leave me will be my last !"

Bellescize gave up arguing the point, promised to remain and kept his word, but gave his wife to understand that, being both of them suspect and included in the same warrant for arrest, their sole means of evading detection was to separate, at any rate for a few weeks. Armande took a long time to let herself be convinced of this, and it was with death in her soul that she made her way to Mademoiselle D——'s, who pluckily offered her sanctuary. For Regnaud, his wandering life started

anew, and each night he made his bed where he might, for no one of his friends dared open his house to him. On two occasions he slept in the kennels of the hounds that guarded the markets, and they made no attempt to molest him, but when daylight came, he knew not where to hide, but avoided crowded places and main thoroughfares. When he intercepted anyone's glance he froze with fright, for he knew that his life was at the mercy of the first comer. He spoke to no one, and was afraid of awakening mistrust if he were silent. He might be betrayed by his walk, were it too slow or too rapid, and his movements or stillness were capable of arousing suspicion. He kept on walking, fearing even to be afraid, dreading lest the anxiety by which he was devoured might expose him, and that anyone on seeing him might recognize that he was suspect as though the word that led to death was branded on his forehead with a hot iron. He was utterly exhausted and would have surrendered himself if he had not kept the idea of saving Armande in his mind, and of going to reassure her and lend her courage, but never twice by the same road. He did not tell her that he was without a refuge, and it was by his orders that she was kept in complete ignorance of what was going on outside. He accomplished every day the painful duty of facing the reproaches of the woman he adored, without failing, and of lying to her to save her from fright. He set his expression, feigned carelessness and gaiety, showing neither fear, remorse nor the agony of tearing

himself from her caresses and tears, when at their parting Armande besought him not to leave her ; and it was by a miracle of love that he had the strength to not interrupt his pious visits after the 19th Pluviôse, without betraying anything to her.

On that day Monsieur and Madame de Troussebois, the Chevalier de Chervil, Madame de Saint-Maurice, and Mademoiselle des Combeaux—who had been brought from Moulins to Paris in two days—were summoned before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The Comte had not altered his defence, nor was he afraid to again accuse his son-in-law. The only result of this inhuman action was to implicate Bellescize and his wife in the accusation, the man “as conspirator and one of the agents of the counter-revolution,” and his wife “as a personal enemy of her country and of having acted with the coolness and premeditation that showed a decided aversion to the land of her birth.” Such an accusation was odious and ridiculous, and the young couple could only be considered guilty of the crime, if such it might be termed, of having delayed their return to France for a few days. Happily the search parties they were avoiding were unsuccessful, and their case was passed over, and Fouquier-Tinville instructed to carry on with the rest of the prisoners. Troussebois, Chervil, and Mademoiselle des Combeaux, convicted “of corresponding with the enemies of the Republic,” were condemned to death and executed on the Place de la Revolution. The Tribunal did not dare to condemn Armande’s mother and grandmother,

who had not been guilty of emigration and, in spite of the protest of the Public Prosecutor, acquitted them, but ordered that they should be confined in a house of detention until peace was restored. The Comtesse de Troussebois survived her daughter by many years, being for some time in dire financial straits. In the year 1809 she applied to the Minister for War for a pension, and renewed her demands in 1814 and 1818, but was unsuccessful, as her husband had not died on the active list with over thirty years' service, as the regulations required. However, in 1826 she received an indemnity of 156,422 francs as commission on the liquidation of refugee's property.

As Givois, the loathsome Prosecutor of the Allier who pandered to the cupidity of his relatives "poor as mice before the Revolution," by having the wealthy landowners of his department executed, had written asking him, Fouquier-Tinville had made the two brothers "dance at the end of a rope," or its equivalent, and drawn up beforehand the Act of Accusation against Troussebois's daughter and son-in-law. The property that the Comte de Troussebois owned at La Mothe was sold on July 17 and 26, August 18 and September 1, 1794. There were numerous lots. The Château of La Mothe was assigned to Ducray, the farmer, for 49,000 Livres; the domain of La Haye to Claud Artaud, a merchant at Cusset, for 40,300 Livres; the Rouchon domain into Remioux, etc.; but the estate of Gluiras in the Vivarais was not confiscated.

There was now nothing left for the Tribunal to do but to find the couple, who were already adjudged guilty, and that was not difficult at a time when betrayal was considered a civic duty. Bellescize was well aware of that fact, but was careful not to tell Armande and continued to let her think that the Comte was still in prison and was being overlooked. However, he no longer risked going to Mademoiselle D——'s except in the evenings, so as to be able to slip in under cover of darkness. The rest of the time, he slunk miserably about Paris, changing quarters every day, not daring to ask a refuge of anyone. Great as was his love for Armande and his desire not to fail her, he realized that he would soon have no strength left to struggle and would end, like a hunted animal run to ground, by letting himself be captured, when the Abbé Anselme Beaudevant, a saintly priest and worthy soul who still, in that year 1794, when all were trembling before the Committees of Sections, thought that "Divine Charity was preferable to human laws," found courage to offer a helping hand to the outcast. Since he had known that he was suspect, he had been seeking a hiding-place for his unfortunate compatriot, but finding one was not so easy, as the least imprudence would have ruined them both. He had at last succeeded, on applying to a cook named Petit "who," relates Madame Granjean, "had been a domestic in the Bellescize family for a long time, and had even looked after Armande's husband when he was a child." Petit was living

with his mistress, a woman named Burcq—who was not ashamed to tell the guillotine knitters of it—at No. 9 in the Rue de la Corderie. It was thanks to them that Regnauld found sanctuary in a furnished hotel in the Rue de la Tisseranderie in the Grêve Quarter. There he thought himself really in safety, and indeed no one would have suspected his presence in a house so close to the Hôtel de Ville, if Petit, either because he had only procured a hiding-place for his former employer to betray him, or for some reason unknown wished to avenge himself on the woman he lived with, or else because the Abbé had promised him a reward that was not promptly forthcoming, had not made his way on the afternoon of the 5th Ventôse to the Committee of the Arcis Section and denounced Beaudevaut for “having begged Citizeness Burcq for a refuge for Bellescize,” and Bellescize “for holding counter-revolutionary sentiments in favour of the brigands of La Vendée.”

At the time of the Revolution the Rue de la Corderie was that part of the Rue de Bretagne between the Rue du Temple and the Rue des Archives. The Rue de la Tisseranderie was one of the most important arteries of Paris, starting from the Rue de la Coutellerie and ending at the Place Baudoyer, both of which have retained their original names.

A warrant of arrest was immediately signed and a patrol of police arrived at the hotel in the Rue de la Tisseranderie. Bellescize was in. Realizing that they had come to arrest him, he threw the

red morocco portfolio lined with green that contained souvenirs of Armande into the slop-bucket and let himself be taken to the Revolutionary Committee of his section. It was then seven o'clock in the evening. At half-past seven, he made his appearance before the Commissaries, confessed everything, but refused to disclose his wife's address, replying to every question put to him about Armande, that he had left her several days previously and did not know where she was. The Abbé Beaudevant had been arrested in the Rue Saint-Jacques at the same time as the man he had tried to save. In his courageous defence, he made no attempt to deny that he had procured "a lodging" for Bellescize, but repeated to every enquiry that was put to him, that he had not seen his friend's wife for several months. The Commissaries Mercier, Mongis, Poirier, Beuge, Camus, Laurent, Legrand, and Villermey reached a decision that "the said Charles Regnauld and Beaudevant should be immediately conducted to the Conciergerie, to be remanded for further investigation."

Twelve days later, they were interrogated by Ardoin, one of the Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal; and on the 25th Ventôse, they were condemned to death, Beaudevant "for having facilitated Regnauld's entry into France," and Bellescize "for being a former noble, a former officer in the La Rochefoucauld Regiment of Dragoons, and for having indulged in correspondence and intelligence with the enemies of the Republic." One witness alone was heard, a Doctor

Launay, who lived in the same house as Petit. The hearing that started at nine o'clock in the morning was very brief, for it was a time when cases were already multiplying to such an extent that there was no time to question the accused and listen to pleadings. Fouquier-Tinville, "in order not to overload the copyists of the Courts and the Registry with work," had made use of the summary of evidence he had used against the Comte de Troussebois. Right to the threshold of death was Bellescize pursued by the hatred that his father-in-law had conceived for him. He was guillotined on the 26th Ventôse, and mounted the scaffold "without uttering a complaint," sustained by the hope that his death would be a deliverance for the unfortunate woman whom no obstacle would now hinder from reconciliation with the members of her family who had not already been executed.

III

SHUT UP IN A ROOM, seeing no one but her hostess, and only feeling secure when the bolts of her door were closed, Armande received no news other than what it was thought prudent to give her. It had thus been an easy matter to conceal her father's death from her, but since Bellescize had stopped coming to see her, her existence had become a nightmare that every hour rendered more appalling. She thought herself abandoned and betrayed. Sometimes she would sit motionless and dumb, with fixed gaze, dead to all that was happening around her ; at other times she would be nervous, quivering at every sound, and with eyes brimming with tears, implore Mademoiselle D—— or Madame Granjean to tell her all they know. Until then she had accepted the necessity of living without her husband, assured that their separation would not last long and that very soon he would take her in his arms and carry her off with him ; and if she wept when he was about to leave her, and begged him to stay a little longer with her, the memory of the short while he had been there impregnated with tenderness the little room where she worked all day long in the happy expectation of seeing him return. Moreover, a secret joy, the

hope that she would soon be a mother, had braced up her courage and helped her to bear the sorrow of her situation. Accustomed now to being ill-used by Fate, she had not dared to confide in anyone for fear of being disillusioned, and now, just as her hopes had become a certainty, Bellescize had interrupted his welcome visits! Armande, having no news of him, did not know what to think. She supposed that he had gone off to put himself out of reach of the searchers, accused him of cowardice, and even went so far as to curse the man she had loved so devotedly and for whom she had given up a life of ease. Each day she gave way more to her grief and sad thoughts, and began to pine away, consumed by a slow fever.

As soon as Madame Granjean had learned of Bellescize's arrest, she had sought and obtained, by Heaven knows what influence, permission to enter the Conciergerie. There she had found the prisoner prepared for death and with no thoughts but for Armande.

"Do not worry about me any more," he had said. "My fate is settled. I beg you not to abandon my dear wife and to save her if you can. I only hope that your kindness to her will soften the terrible memory I shall leave her."

In spite of Madame Granjean's insistence, he had refused the material comforts that prisoners could obtain of their gaolers by payment, and had given her for Armande the little money that he had left.

As it was no longer possible to leave the young wife in ignorance of the arrest of the husband

whom she was accusing of having broken his promises, Madame Granjean went to her and told her that she had some dreadful news to break to her, but that it would be less terrible than the doubts that were assailing her. "Therein I was not wrong," wrote Domergue's friend, "the certainty of his imprisonment genuinely eased her pain. But what precautions we had to take to prevent her from going to join her husband! I promised her that she should have news of him every day."

At the same time as Bellescize's execution was announced in the papers, Madame Granjean received from him a packet of letters to be given to Armande, that were dated in the order he wished she should have them. In the last one of all, that contained a lock of his hair, the young man recalled to his wife the sad story of their love and begged her pardon very pathetically for only letting her know, through pity for her, several weeks after it had happened, the dreadful news that the other letters might have led her to expect. "It seemed to me quite impossible for me to see Armande again without betraying myself, so I had to content myself with sending a few letters by Mademoiselle D——, who returned me the replies. My tears ran fast as I opened them, when I thought that the man they were addressed to had already perished by the executioner's knife!"

"Now that you are arrested," wrote Armande to her husband, "and it is known that we are married, you cannot make use of your safety or mine as a pretext for our separation, so do not

refuse to let me come and share your cell which would be the home of bliss for me. That is my most ardent desire, and I shall not fear for your life when I am not separated from you. I am kept shut up here and everything that goes on is hidden from me. At least I should learn then what has happened to my parents, and we should manage somehow to appease their anger. Maybe our situation will soften their hearts, as we are all in the same miserable state. If only they will forgive me I shall make no further complaint."

In spite of the letters her hostess handed her with regularity, poor Armande was bowed down by melancholy, and had a suspicion of the great disaster that was being kept from her, for the words "Bellescize is dead!" were constantly on her lips. Mademoiselle D—— knew not what to reply nor how to appease a grief that as yet was but a foreboding. She was too young to have any great experience of suffering, and was afraid of letting her terrible secret slip out unawares. Saying to Madame Granjean, "I can no longer stay in that house and be with Madame de Bellescize without a vision of the bloodstained corpses of her father and husband rising before my eyes," she asked her a way out of her dreadful situation, but the two women did not dare come to a resolution and kept the last letters, terrified at the idea that their protégée, in her present state of weakness and light-headedness, might not have the strength to hear the dreadful truth without danger to her health or her reason.

It was at the beginning of the month of Floréal, and—although Armande was still ignorant of the fact that she was a widow—over a month since Bellescize had been guillotined, that she one day heard the newsvendors in the streets shouting out the announcement of a fresh persecution of the nobility. Anxious to know what it was all about, and fearing more for her husband and father than for herself, she dashed to the door that her hostess had forgotten to bolt, and down the stairs, bought the news-sheet, and read the decree on general policy that Saint-Just had proposed to the National Convention at the Sessions of the 26th and 27th Germinal, a decree forbidding nobles of both sexes to remain in Paris, and putting their accomplices, that is to say, all who offered them sanctuary, outside the pale of the law.

Armande now realized why everything was being kept from her, and also what a debt of gratitude she owed to Mademoiselle D——, who for several weeks had constantly been proving her devotion. Not wishing to be a danger to the humble work-woman whom pity and courage had converted into a tower of strength, she lost no time in coming to a decision that Honour dictated to her and her health permitted her. She went to the next-door neighbour's and, handing her the paper she had just bought, said :

“Please tell your friend, Mademoiselle D—— not to look for me. Show her this paper and she will understand what I cannot explain to you.”

“She disappeared,” wrote Madame Granjean,

“asked the way to the Conciergerie, and, on arrival, curiosity led her to the reception-room, where she made enquiries. I do not know how she came to learn of her husband’s death, but that terrible news deprived her at once of the will and strength to go on living. Only one idea remained to her and that was to die as well. It is uncertain what happened next, whether she was arrested and taken to the Hôtel de Ville or went there of her own accord from directions she received. What is certain is that she was there at half-past eight in the evening and was immediately taken to a room where were sitting two police administrators, Jean-Leonard Faro, the painter from the Poissonnière Section, and Lelièvre.” Madame Granjean is wrong in reporting that Madame de Bellescize apostrophized the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal and was arrested on the spot. That story became a tradition in the family, as Madame de Troussebois wrote in a begging letter to the Emperor in 1809 : “My only daughter went to Fouquier-Tinville and said to him, ‘You see before you the widow of the Comte de Bellescize and daughter of the Comte de Troussebois. You caused them to perish on the scaffold and I wish to die there like them.’ That monster had my poor child thrown into the Conciergerie, and on the morrow she was dead.”

Armande stated to the Administrators that she had come to submit to the law of General Security ordained by the Convention. On being asked by the Commissaries for her name, age, birthplace, and profession, she replied that she was named

Louise - Armande - Amedée Baillard - Troussebois, aged eighteen years, the wife of Charles Regnauld, soldier, lawyer, and merchant; that she was born in Paris, where she had been working as a seamstress. She obstinately refused to say where she had been living since her husband had been arrested.

"Was she with her husband at the time of his arrest?"

"No."

"Did she know where her husband was now?"

The unfortunate woman was choked by a sob, and after making indescribable efforts to regain control of herself replied suddenly:

"He is dead."

"Had she still a father, and where was he?"

"She did not know."

"Had she had any children by her marriage?"

"No," said Armande, knowing that, if she wanted to die, she must not confess that she was on the point of becoming a mother.

The examination went on. Pressed with questions, she replied with incoherence, mixing up dates and confusing places and only retained sufficient presence of mind to refrain from divulging the name and address of her benefactress. Nothing mattered to her, save that she desired to die and not have her agony prolonged. Faro and Lelièvre, not understanding the extremity of the poor girl's grief, only saw in her a prey that offered and were careful not to let her escape. "The aforementioned Troussebois," they wrote, "tries to evade our questions, pretending to be in a condition that

might make one believe that she is out of her mind ; and as it seems that she was a refugee, seeing that she does not dispute her return to France, we have decided that she shall be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and we have furthermore decided that the said Troussebois shall be taken to the House of Detention known as the Conciergerie."

This happened on the evening of the 5th Floréal, and at midday on the morrow she was brought before the Judge Deliège, who put her through a brief cross-examination during which she persisted in maintaining silence as to where she had slept on the eve of the day she had got herself arrested. At half-past nine on the morning of the 7th Floréal, her name was called out in her prison, and then, by very narrow and filthy passages, she was brought to a wide corridor, where people mocked and insulted her as she passed. Entering the Hall of Liberty, formerly the Grand Chamber, where the Revolutionary Tribunal had been holding its sessions for over a year, she mounted a tall platform. On her right was the public, knitters and *sans-culottes*, who came there as to a show ; on her left, with their black cloaks and plumes, the three judges, Dumas, Marie Maire, and Deliège ; facing her, the jury and the new understudy of the Public Prosecutor, Liendon, a farmer's son from the Bourbonnais, who was taking Fouquier-Tinville's place. Dumas, the President, warned the accused to pay attention to all she would hear, and ordered the Clerk of the Court to read the charge sheet.

Armande found herself being reproached for "having conspired against the French People by holding correspondence and intelligence with Foreign Powers, tending to lead them on to commit acts of hostility against France." She was not listening and did not even understand, for her agony was so great that her soul had already left its mortal shell, and it was a madwoman standing at the Bar of the Tribunal. Dumas paid no heed to that, for he was a bully who would not allow the accused opportunity of speaking and had personal reasons for detesting women. He wasted no time over his cross-examination, no more indeed than did over his defence the Citizeness Regnauld's officious advocate, Lafleuterie, who was used to receiving a big fee for his services and put up a wretched defence when he was not betraying his clients. As for the summary of evidence, Liendon read over one that was already of proved efficacy, since it had brought Troussebois, Chervil, and Mademoiselle des Combeaux to the block and had also served against Bellecize. The mere fact of there being no witnesses was sufficient to condemn the prisoner to death, and the jury were decided in advance—Renaudin the tanner, Pigeot the barber, and Chrétien the caterer being familiars and body-servants of Robespierre. After leaving the Sessions room for a few minutes, they brought in a verdict of Guilty, and then the President's hat could be seen to bob to right and left as he consulted his assessors. Dumas "the Red" arose and delivered the sentence. It was Death.

The same evening, Armande de Bellescize climbed the scaffold. For three days she had eaten nothing and her reason was wandering. Her extreme pallor, caused by grief and inanition, had not removed altogether from her face all traces of birth, beauty, and youth. She was buried in the Cemetery of the Madeleine, not far from the spot where lay the husband she had loved so well and the pitiless father whose rancour had brought them there.

On the following day could be read in the *Correspondence of Paris and the Departments*, under the heading of "Varieties," the following words: "The crimes of men have passed, their virtue remains."

In Posselt's *European Annals*, 1805, 9th Part, we find "The True History of an Event at the Time of the Terror, from a MSS. of Madame Granjean, by Cramer." "The donatrix of this document," we read in the *Annals*, "was a Frenchwoman possessing a most remarkable spirit and wonderful nobility of heart. She was the intimate friend of Madame Roland, who handed her her papers as she was dying. She begged the translator to assure his readers that the document, as the title moreover states, contains nothing but the pure and simple truth of the event as it occurred. In her account, Madame Granjean calls Madame de Bellescize by the name of Pauline and not Armande, an error of name, possibly voluntary, that in no way detracts from the striking authenticity of the ocular testimony, without which this story could not have been written."

THE TERROR AT NÎMES:
MADemoiselle CHABAUD DE LA
TOUR

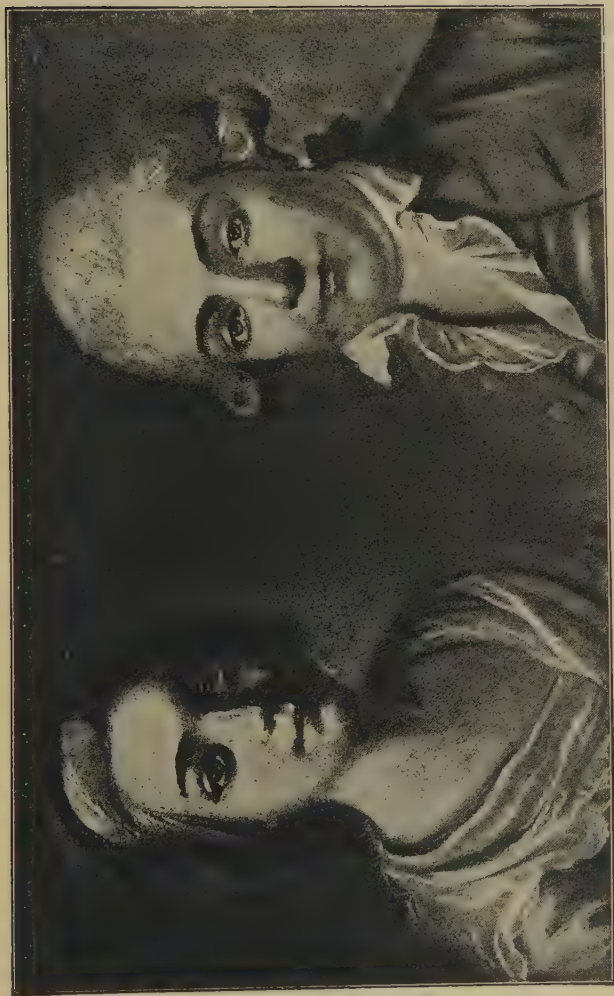
I

IN THE YEAR 1793, when the events related in this story started, the Château of La Tour, an old South of France *mas*, had belonged for the twelvemonth since their mother's death, to Citizen Chabaud, formerly Latour, and his sister Suzanne. It was an important estate with fields of corn, mulberry-trees, and vines, and meadows sloping down to the limpid river. A dusty avenue of plane-trees led up to the house, whose long façade, flanked by a heavy square tower, stretched its rough lines on one side to the courtyard and on the other the garden that seemed minute in the deep shade of the great pines, with its narrow box-bordered alleys and its dim copses of green oaks and laurels.

Suzanne Chabaud loved the ancient walls where she had spent the bright days of her childhood, and that for her held memories of all that had ever pleased or saddened her in those days. However far off her father, an officer of Engineers, might be stationed, he was always pleased to return to La Tour to spend his leave with his family. He had died at Cette in 1791, in the heat of the summer, and the following year his wife, heart-broken at her loss, had fallen ill in the castle of

mourning and passed quietly away a few days after their return to Nîmes.

Orphaned at the age of nineteen, Mademoiselle Chabaud had not left the house in the Rue des Tondeurs where her mother had died, but continued to live on there with her brother, married three years since to Julie Verdier de Lacoste, a girl friend of Suzanne's before becoming her sister-in-law, and it was settled that they should go to La Tour as before, the following spring; but the political struggles in which he was involved by family and religious relations were becoming so bitter that Antoine Chabaud, a Major in the National Guards, was obliged to remain in Nîmes, and the two women took up their residence in the country, taking Madame Rolland with them. The latter was Julie Verdier's sister, and like her had been one of that group of girls who used to meet several times a week in the house in the Rue des Tondeurs for music or charitable work. At any other time, with normal conditions, Suzanne would have been delighted to go to La Tour, but she had a presentiment that the time was at hand when the Protestants of Nîmes, who had been at the head of local administration for the last two years, would be driven out of office by the demagogues and perhaps subjected to reprisals. Coming of a Calvinist stock that had faced the danger of persecution, she was of great piety, and family traditions and that piety, combined with a strict upbringing and early sorrow, had ripened her mind and hardened her character. Small, frail, and rather round-



SUZANNE CHABAUD AND HER BROTHER ANTOINE.
(From a pastel of the period reproduced by M. Jacques Dumas.)

shouldered, she wore her black hair combed flat over a bold forehead. Her lips were a trifle thick, but her chin was firm, and beneath thick eyebrows her wonderfully sweet and dreamy eyes lit up her pale and serious child's face. Hidden behind such a disappointing appearance was a valiant soul as ready for martyrdom as for battle, but she knew all that the Protestants had gone through during the wars and dreaded the return of those dreadful times. Then again, "living in Christ, the peaceful Saviour," she was afraid lest her brothers, spurred by the attacks of their enemies, might forget the words of the Scripture, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," and destroy themselves by acts of violence. She remembered the day of anguish she had spent in prayer with her mother at the Nîmes house on June 14, 1790. It was on a Monday, and her father had just been elected Administrator of the Department by 241 votes to 9. There had been a conflict the day before between Catholics and non-Catholics, without it being possible to say for certain who were the aggressors, since for the last few months religious feuds that seemed to have been dropped at the beginning of the Revolution had reappeared. The Protestants had been humiliated by their check-mate at the municipal elections, and the Catholics, despite their numbers, at not yet having been able to get any of their members elected to the Directorates of the District and Department. A petition demanding that Liberty of Conscience should be withdrawn had been signed by 3,000 persons in

the Church of the Penitents. Violently worded pamphlets and caricatures were distributed in the streets by Capuchin monks. During the night of the 13th to the 14th, three companies of the National Guard composed solely of Catholics had been concentrated by Froment, one of their leaders, at his house that communicated by means of the old ramparts with the Jacobins' Church. The patriots, on their side, had mustered the Militia who were friendly to them and sent messages asking for reinforcements, to the Calvinist districts. Each side was busy arming itself for a struggle.

As the sunlight, particularly hot that day, poured through the partly opened windows of the house in the Rue des Tondeurs, mother and daughter could hear afar off calls to arms, insults, and dreadful shouts of, "Kill ! Kill the Papists !" and "Long live the King ! Raise the Cross ! Death to the Blacks !" (the Protestants in the South of France were known as Blackthroats). The Catholics in the Militia, to distinguish themselves, wore a red pom-pom in their hats, hence the names of reds and blacks). After isolated shots here and there, there came a long fusillade about four o'clock. There was fighting on the Esplanade, where the patriots, after forcing the Capuchin Monastery, had mustered and were attacking the Froment house. The Jacobins' Church being closer to the Rue des Tondeurs than the Esplanade, Madame and Mademoiselle Chabaud listened with terror to the sounds of battle drawing nearer. There were ambuscades and sword-fights in the

winding streets, and doors of houses were broken in. From the Arena to the Augustus Gate, and from the Esplanade to the Courts, Reds and Blacks were fighting, chasing and murdering each other. Finally, at six in the evening, there was the roar of cannon that compelled the Catholics to give in.

Lieutenant-Colonel Chabaud had been with his son in the thickest of the *mêlée*, and when he returned, utterly worn out, he was deeply disturbed at all he had seen. In vain he had braved the threats and rage of maddened patriots and the fanaticism of his co-religionists; he had been unable to prevent bloodshed. To be sure, a few Protestants had met their death in the affray, and others, in the days that followed, had been treacherously assassinated in lonely homesteads, but it had been they who were the principal killers. They had plundered the monasteries and convents, wrecked the college, and ravaged a number of private houses, amongst them those of Froment, the Abbé of Bragouze, and Chevidan's. Out of the hundred (*Fajon*), or perhaps three hundred killed (*Marguerittes*), twenty-one only of their side died.

They emerged triumphant from the struggle, and their opponents left Nîmes. Nobles emigrated, priests hid themselves in the mountains, and royalist bands were dispersed. The despoiled Capuchin Monastery became a place of assembly and later a prison; in the Jacobins' Church the tapers were extinguished, images removed, preachers in black cassocks replaced the white monks in snowy

In the Shadows

surplices and golden chasubles, and the bare walls, steeped in the incense of Gregorian Chants, resounded to the rough hymns of the Huguenots :

Oh, Lord ! Hear my prayer,
Listen to my voice when I call unto Thee.

CLEMENT MAROT.

The Protestants then proceeded to seize the reins of power. Previous to the Revolution, they had been able to be neither "mayors nor captains, nor magistrates, nor judges, nor consuls," but now they filled every office—Administrators of Districts and Department, Judges, Advocates at the Criminal Court, Officers of the Legion, and, a few months after the affray at Nîmes, members of the Municipality.

The men whom the aforementioned events had brought to the head of affairs were honest and sincere, regretted the excesses committed by the frantic Militia from the Vaunage and the Cevennes, whom they had called to their aid. Several of them had salvaged Catholic fugitives, and Colonel Chabaud offered sanctuary to one of the leaders of the counter-revolution, which was refused.

The members of the Reformed Church were of all Frenchmen the most interested in there being a Revolution, for after years of persecution, the Edict of 1787 had only given them their natural right. Thanks to the energy of their pastor, the Deputy Rabaud Saint-Etienne, whose intervention had imparted a special character to the 1789 movement at Nîmes, inspired more or less directly by

Reform, the Constitution had freed them. They dreaded nothing so much as to see a reaction take place and threaten the liberties that were dear to them and that they were resolved to defend. They therefore made the best they could out of a victory tarnished by its massacres, dreaming that they could at will arrest the progress of a Revolution that had been hailed with enthusiasm and energetically sustained, but failed to see that, in spite of their love of order, they had triumphed by the help of disorder, and that sooner or later they would be swept away by the storm they had raised.

Although disqualified from holding Government posts under the Old Régime, they had by their activity and industry succeeded in getting to the top in business, and the manufactures were all in their hands. Being thus, most of them, pretty wealthy, the influence they wielded now that the nobility had emigrated could not fail to arouse envy, and little by little, at first without fuss and then with arrogance, led on by flattery and aided by circumstances, the little people—stocking-makers, taffeta manufacturers, upholsterers, and the like—began to demand places in local administrations. In opposition to the bourgeois club of the “Friends of Liberty and Equality,” which had been known as the “Society of Friends of the Constitution” until 1792—it met in the Assembly Rooms and the annual subscription was twenty-four Livres—there was founded a “Popular Society” on November 13, 1791, that corresponded with the Jacobins of Paris, brought the worst accusations against the

officials of the Hôtel de Ville, Department, and District, and after June 20 and August 10, 1792, almost succeeded in supplanting them in the councils. The fear this Society inspired in the Administrators of the Directorates drove them to extreme measures, such as the confiscation of property, the melting of church bells, imprisonment of priests who had not taken the oath, etc., and the "Friends of Liberty and Equality" made various attempts at fusion with the other Club that were rejected every time.

The triumph of Marat on May 31, 1793, when the Girondin deputies, amongst whom was the pastor Rabaud Saint-Etienne, were proscribed, raised a storm of indignation amongst the Moderates of the Gard, who broke with the Jacobins of Paris and rose in revolt against the National Convention. Walling up the doors of the great monastery where the members of the "Popular Society" used to hold their meetings, they disarmed the *sans-culottes*, drove them out, and compelled them to seek refuge in the country districts on June 10 and 12, 1793.

It was about the time of this *coup de force* that Suzanne Chabaud moved out to La Tour. Her nearest relatives, family friends, and co-religionists were at the head of the rebellion, for Insurrectional Sections had been formed in Nîmes since the month of March—Antoine Chabaud being Commissary of the Sixth Section; Rolland of the Eighth Section; and their brother-in-law, Henri Verdier de Lacoste, a fiery young man of twenty-six, Vice-President of

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the Committee that directed these Sections. Monsieur d Azémar commanded the National Guards that were in revolt, and Monsieur Meynier de Salinelles, whose daughter Julie was Suzanne's childhood friend, was Mayor of Nîmes.

Regular Administration and Illegal Sections were united in their determination to "break away from the people of Paris," and on June 21st, the deputies of the Gard Communes, meeting in the Assembly Rooms, constituted themselves into a Representative Assembly and vowed resistance to Oppression.

Whenever he came out to La Tour, Antoine Chabaud voiced his confidence in the success of the enterprise. He was a sturdy lad of twenty-four, adored by the National Guards under his command, on account of his "five feet five and a half inches," his handsome face, and his jovial humour. He was of excitable temperament and one who, in fear of being irresolute, showed himself obstinate and unshakable. He delighted to read aloud the long appeal to insurrection that the Committee of Public Safety, constituted on June 24th by the electors of the Gard, was distributing in the country-side. They were going to march against Paris and raise an army of 1,200 volunteers. Durand, the Mayor of Montpellier, was directing the movement, and had come, in company with the Girondin Lavauguyon, to hear his virulent attacks on the Paris Commune applauded at the Assembly Rooms. There was good news from the neighbouring Departments. The revolt had spread from Bordeaux to Lyons, and the whole

Midi of France was up in arms against the National Convention.

Madame Chaubaud and her sister shared the young patriot's enthusiasm, but Rolland, as delicate in the whole of his person as his brother-in-law was dull, was far from being like him, buoyed up with hope, but did not dare to contradict him for fear of discouraging himself. Suzanne, more ardent as women are when they fear danger for those that are dear to them, was indignant at so much confidence. She was utterly ignorant of politics, but knew that it was futile to struggle against those in power. Her grandmother had been shut up in the Tower of Constance for refusing to abjure her faith, her father had been retarded in his career for not taking the Catholic oath, and, as a child, she had been told the terrible history of the Persecutions, pastors and faithful burned at the stake, temples broken down, dragonnades. She felt that the men of the Revolution, following the Representatives of Divine Right, had inherited their omnipotence and would break down any resistance offered them just as a century before the Camisarde Revolt, in which many of her relatives had taken part, had been broken.

Formerly, the Protestants, fighting for their faith, had showed themselves pitiless, burning churches and massacring the faithful who worshipped the same God as themselves. Now they were marching side by side with their former enemies, Catholics and Royalists of the Ardèche and the Lozère, against the most frightful tyranny

that had ever battered upon France. Would they be able to shake off the painful yoke, save their threatened persons and menaced businesses, and with faces turned towards Geneva, the model city whose institutions could not be improved on, establish at home, in a nation united and victorious over the Jacobins, a Christian Republic whose strict régime would sway every religion ?

General Carteaux, who had been sent against the insurgents of Languedoc by Dubois-Crancé and the People's Representatives with the Army of the Alps, was marching down the left bank of the Rhône at the head of 4,000 Allobroges, and the populations of the Isère and the Drôme engaged in the Federalist movement had just surrendered and laid down their arms, thus closing the passage between Lyons and Marseilles. On receipt of these news, the Sections of Nîmes met in a hurry, and their Committee immediately sent a haughty message to the representative, Dubois-Crancé, summoning him to arrest the march of his troops. Meynier de Salinelles the younger was dispatched to Montpellier and Roquier to Marseilles to come to an understanding with those towns, whilst the National Guards of Nîmes, Uzès and Sommières, who had been hurriedly mustered, received orders to move, under the command of Marignac, to Pont-Saint-Esprit, to oppose the entry of Conventional troops into the Gard.

On July 12th, Carteaux was no more than half a league from Pont-Saint-Esprit, but favourable

replies were coming in from Hérault and the Bouches-du-Rhône ; the Girondin Deputies Aubry, Chazel, Rabaud-Pomier, and Rabaud-Saint-Etienne had made well-cheered speeches in the Assembly Rooms ; the success of the counter-revolutionaries appeared certain, as the efforts of several united Departments could not be in vain ; and Marignac flattered himself at being able to beat the enemy.

On July 13th, the National Guards of the Gard, the only ones to reach Pont-Saint-Esprit, after destroying an arch of the only bridge that there spanned the Rhône to assure themselves against attack or surprise, threw themselves into the town, which at dawn on the 14th was surrounded, the Mountaineers having checkmated Marignac's childish tactics by crossing the river on rafts, and gunfire opened. At the first shot from the Conventional batteries, the warriors of Nîmes threw down their arms and fled. There was not a single drop of blood spilt, as the beaten Militia abandoned Pont-Saint-Esprit and returned to Nîmes with their General to announce their defeat.

Thereupon panic seized upon the merchants who had so recently dispatched virulent messages to the People's Representatives and replied to their appeal by holding them up to public contempt. It was now a question as to who should be the first to make honourable amends. Administrations and Directorates retracted, the Representative Assembly dissolved and withdrew the resolutions it had made, and the Municipality humbly tendered its resig-

nation. The Union of the South was broken up, and the revolt collapsed miserably.

Citizen Chabaud had gone to Pont-Saint-Esprit at the head of his battalion, and returned to La Tour complaining bitterly of treachery and ashamed at not having had a chance of fighting. Rolland also had taken part in the ill-starred enterprise, and had started out with zeal, courage, and something akin to hope. He had no idea that the Gard Companies would not be supported by those from Hérault and Bouches-du-Rhône, who had pledged themselves. He was in despair on seeing the triumph of the Convention, and at La Tour, where he had taken up his quarters with his family, he was constantly oppressed by anxiety, and prophesied the direst catastrophes, in spite of the tenderness and sympathy shown him. Suzanne Chabaud was of his opinion, and together they would frequently discuss their unhappy country and the purely personal disasters that could be already foreseen, but Antoine Chabaud avoided their discussions whenever possible, and nothing could shake his sense of security. Out of friendship for him, his wife and Rolland backed him up, making out that the fears and presentiments of the other two were exaggerated.

With each successive day, however, disturbing news began to reach La Tour. The *sans-culottes* had returned to Nîmes in triumph, reopened the doors of their club, and closed those of the "Friends of Liberty and Equality." On August 10th, civic rejoicings had been held to commemorate the

victory of Pont-Saint-Esprit, when Rovère and Poulthier, two of the People's Representatives, decked in their finery and wearing their tricolour sashes, had made their entry into the Hall of the Assembly Rooms, unseated the whole of the Municipal Council, and except for three members, the Directorate of the Department as well. Fresh Administrators, Directors, and Town Councillors were elected, who were for the greater part chosen from amongst the members of the "Popular Society." The new Mayor was one Courbis, who took part in the 1790 affray, and betrayed the Nîmes Moderates who had at one time elected him secretary of their club. Formerly Proctor to the Seneschal of Nîmes, he was a clever and cunning business man of whom everything was to be feared, as he was poor, greedy, and envious, and already nurtured the secret intention of bringing low the Protestants whose wealth and influence he grudged. He had a regular series of men whom he could trust ready to his hand: Bresson; Giret, the former curé of Saint-Quentin; Eynard, the professor of literature; Elias Dumas, a renegade Protestant minister; and Triel and Laporte, apostate abbés. His loathsome unctuousness had attached to him men of the people like Bonijoly, the tobacconist; Brunier, the caterer; Simon, the upholsterer; Thomas, and a host of others without a single qualification for the offices he had invested them with. They were mostly from the country and known at La Tour. Some—taffeta makers bent over their looms from five in the morning till midnight, shopkeepers,

stocking-makers, factory hands, and agricultural labourers—were mean-spirited, incapable of doing harm in private life, but liable to be turned into savage beasts by the intoxication of power. Their minds had been filled with suspicions and alarms, and learning the words that saved and those that destroyed, they saw all around them “aristocrats, federalists, officials, Moderates, and Egotists” that must be rendered harmless. The others, still clad in the old fashion, in green coat and breeches, or disguised through cunning in the carmagnole and Phrygian cap, were trying to get a seat at the expense of the conquered whom they were already describing on their secret lists as “comfortably off, rich, or very rich.” Enviousness would drive this category into crime, and fear had already laid them in the mud.

It was at five o'clock on the evening of September 10th that the old Administrators of the Gard, strong in the uprightness of their cause, surrendered their seats to their strange successors, and on the 22nd that Rovère and Poultier presented themselves at the Administrative Council, where they denounced the retiring officials as being guilty of federalism and ordered the disarmament of the suspects. Courbis and his followers were ordered to carry out these mandates of the People's Representatives, and they excelled themselves in their zeal.

All Citizen Chabaud's relatives, the Verdiers de Lacoste, the Rollands, the de Baguets, and all his friends and co-religionists, such as Meynier de

Salinelles, David Arnaud, Guizot, Barre, and d'Azémar, were attainted, whilst he himself was deprived of his rank in the National Guard. This last measure revolted him. Son of a soldier, he had for a time worn the white uniform of the Rohan-Soubise Regiment, and had been overjoyed and flattered at his election to the staff of the Nîmes Legion. His men adored him and called him a "good commander and a good sort." He refused to submit himself to such treatment and decided to go to Nîmes to protest against his degradation, but his prudent sister set to work to point out to him that the step he was proposing to take was not only futile but might spell danger for them all, and this time she was supported by the weight of the whole family. Unfortunately the opposition and alarm of his relatives strengthened the young man in his design. He would not listen to others' advice for fear that people might say he was influenced, dreaded nothing more than seeming to shirk danger, and so saddled his horse and rode off towards Nîmes.

He returned the same evening, triumphantly bearing a letter from Rovère and Poultier, vindicating his patriotism, that was, he said, a veritable vade-mecum that would render him invulnerable to all attacks. Then, as he could keep nothing back from his sister, who had ever been his confidant, he related the details of his trip, his interview with the People's Representatives, who were very courteous to him, and then his quarrel with Courbis.

He had scarcely uttered Courbis's name than he



THE CHATEAU DE LA TOUR.

Present day.

(By courtesy of the Baronne de Roux-Larcy.)

was pressed with questions on all sides. Drawing himself up, he boasted that he was afraid of no one, and had been to see the terrible Mayor at his house, beside the Law Courts. He had been received, but with insolence and threats, and returning insult for insult, had braved the tyrant's wrath. Everyone was aghast. Rolland knew Courbis's nature better than the others, knew that he was hard as iron, irascible, utterly vindictive, and that he did not threaten in vain. Chabaud, in reply to their protests, merely showed his certificate and said that he was not afraid of anyone now. Suzanne loved her brother with all her heart. Although he was four years older than her, she watched over him like the mother they had lost, and feared neither to contradict him nor to defend him against his own impetuosity. She hid neither her fears nor the tears that now came to her eyes, begged that he would heed her, and succeeded in getting his promise that he would not leave La Tour again without warning her in advance.

Chabaud, when not in one of his pig-headed moods, was the most docile of creatures, and stayed there, spending his days reading some work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, his favourite author, watching his sister painting flowers in water-colours, walking with his guests along the banks of the Gardon, or into the vineyards to pick the sugary blue grapes from the vines on the slopes. It was the happy season of the year, when the fruit of the earth drew poor and rich closer together into a

common contentment, but, alas! in that year of Grace 1793, there was a certain constraint weighing on the groups of wine-pickers. It was known that at Nîmes a Committee of Public Safety, "a confederation of brigands," had been organized, that had made an auspicious beginning by issuing an appeal to delation, at its first session. "Denounce the seducer, let us know the traitors. No misplaced pity, no mercy for the guilty." Thereupon the arrests commenced.

After sundown on October 8th there came a man to La Tour, asking to speak to Mademoiselle Chabaud in secret, and when he had been brought in, said that he had been sent by the watchmaker whose shop was in the Rue des Tondeurs. Neither Suzanne nor her brother were acquainted with him, but as they used to pass his place when they were small children, they had often caught sight of the craftsman leaning over his bench and received a nod and a smile from him. Breathlessly they listened to the messenger's news:

"Some gendarmes," said he, "came into the street last night asking for Citizen Chabaud, as they intended to arrest him. Your neighbour, who is not interested in politics but wishes you well and would like to save you, told me to warn you, and I have come to offer Monsieur Chabaud a refuge in my house in Nîmes, where he will be safe from search parties and well received, as also Monsieur Rolland."

The two friends accepted gratefully. "They went off to sleep in a barn where the grapes were

kept during the wine-harvest," wrote Mademoiselle Chabaud, "and as no one had been to the Château during the night, my sister-in-law, Madame Rolland, and I went very early in the morning to take them some peasant's clothing and hats that they were to put on to disguise themselves. We went back to the barn after giving them time to change and make themselves up, and starting roaring with laughter at seeing the ridiculous effect of the little three-cornered hats on their heads. It is really rather difficult to conceive how that laugh was conjured up, seeing that our men were in danger and their weird costume was an indication of their flight. Alas! that mad moment of gaiety was soon over, and we had to say good-bye and tear ourselves from our friends."

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The departure of Chabaud and Rolland for Nîmes coincided with the end of the wine-picking, and the whole country-side that had been so full of life now appeared extremely dismal in contrast. Beneath the cloudless canopy of a paler sky the vines were shedding their useless reddening foliage, but the moving figures of the pickers were no longer to be seen, nor could one hear the singing of the women cutters nor the cries of the carters urging on their horses through the rutty narrow tracks. In the old castle that seemed much bigger after the departure of the two fugitives, Madame Chabaud and Madame Rolland were overcome by their grief, but little Suzanne, of sterner mould, lost neither her presence of mind nor her courage,

In the Shadows

did her best to comfort her friends and show them, by her example, that it was far better not to be afraid. Sitting on a rustic saddle between two *banastous*—deep provision baskets that hung on each side of a horse—she set out early every morning from La Tour, and struck the main road, once known as the Royal Road, leading to Nîmes, near Saint-Chartes. In this simple and unpretentious manner she made her way through the clear morning air, sometimes all alone, sometimes accompanied by the gardener, ambling along on her steed, like a housewife going to market.

She had three leagues to do along that road that wound over bare hills or stretched between vineyards and ploughed fields, but she wasted no time, and often, on reaching the top of Mont-Cavalier, seeing the town at her feet and hearing its noises come to her through the still air, she would feel a stifling emotion come over her. She never knew what to expect down there, whether she would find her brother safe or if she would be told that he had been arrested. Descending the slope drenched with the perfume that the rising sun was drawing from the thyme and lavender, she bore round the walls of the Citadel, crossed the Square, and putting her horse up at the inn, made her way to the Market-Place. Gaily greeting the women she knew, at their stalls, she made various purchases, and then plunged prudently into a labyrinth of streets and passages that intercrossed each other. She stepped briskly along the cobbles, retracing her steps and stopping now and then to see if she

were followed, and finally slipped into the house where her brother had found sanctuary.

A little later she would be on her horse again on her way back to La Tour, pleased to be able to tell her sister-in-law and Madame Rolland that their husbands were still safe. "Nothing is lacking that can contribute to their well-being. . . . Their host is giving all his care and setting all his mind to distracting them and looking after them."

This news she brought to La Tour was welcomed with such gladness, and Suzanne was so set on getting it herself, that she never once hesitated to carry out her pious mission in spite of the fact that the month of Frimaire, with its rain, was starting. She had remained in the country so that her brother's presence in Nîmes might not be suspected, but her long stay was causing comment in the neighbourhood, and her goings and comings every day were becoming more risky. Already the peasantry, who still uncovered when they were not in groups, affected to look with an air of connivance, when they raised their three-cornered hats to the lady of the Château on seeing her on the roads in every sort of weather, and on the outskirts of the town men wearing the red bonnet looked askance at the girl who passed at the same times every day, perched upon horseback between her wicker panniers.

Deeming it wiser to return to Nîmes before it was too late, Suzanne moved with her sister-in-law to their place in the Rue des Tondeurs, and Madame Rolland to her house in the Rue des Greffes, whose

stores were still filled with bags of grain. At the same time, also, Chabaud and Rolland, either because they considered they were no longer secure with the watchmaker's friend or because they did not want to endanger the worthy man any longer and preferred to owe their safety to one of their own folk, took refuge with one Guizot, a Protestant like themselves and who had also been involved in the Federalist movement. He had been a member of the Committee of Public Safety nominated on June 24th by the electors of the Gard, and was the father of that Guizot who was Louis-Philippe's Minister. André Guizot, a clever lawyer, owed the fact that he had not been persecuted to the protection of a neighbour, a very influential member of the Revolutionary Committee. Madame Guizot received the two brothers-in-law and took them into a room that was usually kept closed, where she looked after them herself, deeming it more prudent to take no one else into her confidence. Guizot and his wife, who were both young and had been married for seven years, were two exceptional beings, he being very learned and profoundly sensitive, whilst she, tenderly loved and tenderly loving, serious and thoughtful, was one of those women one should not and could not easily forget. The lawyer lived in a terraced house on the Cours with Monsieur and Madame Bonicel, his parents-in-law, a couple of austere and strict habits, and steeped in the traditions and doctrines that had made the old Huguenot spirit what it was.

Madame Guizot was not long in asking Suzanne

and Madame Chabaud to her house to supper. The Rue des Tondeurs was at no great distance from the Cours, but was situated in the centre of the town, and though dark and narrow, was difficult to leave without being seen, but how were they to resist so tempting an offer and one so often repeated? Once again, it was the kindly watchmaker who came to his protégées' rescue. Going into his shop, where they disguised themselves by covering their heads with a *thérèse*, a kind of black lace mantilla worn by women of the people, a short skirt, and a peasant's cloak to hide their size, they waited till the alley was deserted before emerging. Fortunately there were no clocks about the town, and so when any passer-by appeared to be unduly interested in the young women, the watchmaker, who was accompanying them, was able to distract attention from them. Reaching the Guizot's door, they refrained from knocking before they were absolutely certain that they were running no risks; "but," said Mademoiselle Chabaud, "my heart beat fast with fright, and afterwards with happiness at seeing my brother."

It was altogether a charming party. Monsieur and Madame Bonicel retired early, the two children, aged five and two, had been put to bed by their mother, and those remaining were friends of an age. They played at Picquet, or chatted; but Guizot stipulated that no mention should be made of public affairs, "which," he remarked, "occupy our time and worry us ceaselessly, so let us at least forget them for the short while you are here."

Still, despite every effort, they ended by returning to the painful subject, for it was quite impossible for them to hide their preoccupation. The Terror was beginning, and since the month of Brumaire, three hundred warrants had been issued. All the members of the former Federalist Committees, with the exception of Guizot and two or three others, had been arrested, and the Capuchin Monastery was filled to overflowing with prisoners. Domiciliary visits and search-parties were becoming more frequent, and a Civic Festival, a sinister masquerade, had just been celebrated by the *sans-culotte* in honour of their god Marat. It is a well-known fact that over three hundred victims were shot down at Lyons on the Place des Brotteaux and on the banks of the Rhône. Scaffolds were being erected everywhere. The wholesale massacres started at Paris, where two Jacobins of Nîmes, Mayère and Fauvety, were judges on the Revolutionary Tribunal. Several women had been executed, and Rabaud-Saint-Etienne had just been guillotined. (This was on December 5th. His wife had committed suicide on October 15th.) A Tribunal of the same sort was being organized in the Gard, and would not be long in starting its bloody work. It was surmized that Courbis would be its President, and it was guessed with what frenzy he would persecute all those whose fortunate position had made them hateful to him. As a matter of fact, Courbis refused the Presidency, which was given to Eynard, a Professor of Literature, but, as it will be seen,

the Tribunal was under the absolute domination of Courbis all the time. For those who recognized they were thus fated, there was no other means of salvation than slipping into Switzerland. Suzanne besought her brother to fly, and also ventured to give the same advice to Guizot, considering that he might not always be invulnerable, but the latter made light of the girl's fears and replied :

“ Chabaud has only acted according to the laws, Rolland as well, and as for myself, is it likely that my life would be in danger because I was a member of an illegal Committee for twenty-four hours ? ”

Just about that time it was rumoured at Nîmes that Boisset, the new People's Representative on mission to Hérault and the Gard, was, although he had been a member of the Mountain Side, distinctly ill-disposed towards Courbis and the *sans-culottes* of the Popular Society. Born of gentle parents and brother of a refugee, it appears as though it were fear, rather than his convictions, that inspired his votes in the National Convention, and thus now, freed from the terrible contingencies he dared not resist, and relying on a decree of the Assembly, he had just dissolved the Committee of Supervision established by Rovère. It was, in Suzanne's opinion, a Heaven-sent opportunity to go to Montpellier, where the People's Representative was then, to try and get him to lift the warrant of arrest that was hanging over Chabaud, and once her decision taken, the girl did not want to put off her journey for a single day. The coach left Nîmes at three o'clock in the morning,[”] and she employed the little time

remaining to her before the following day in asking for letters of introduction. It was with this end in view that she dragged off her sister-in-law to see Bertrand, one of the members of the Popular Society, whom she had been informed enjoyed great credit with Boisset on account of his animosity towards Courbis. It was night-time when they reached the club-house, so the two women were groping their ways up the stairs in the dark, when the noise they made brought Bertrand's sister out of her room. Lamp in hand, she started to belabour them with her tongue in a shrill voice, "mistaking them for robbers or still viler creatures." Madame Chabaud, intimidated, wanted to withdraw, but Suzanne, determined to see the matter through, replied in firm tones that she had come to see Bertrand.

"At this hour?"

"Yes, I must speak to him now. I am going away early to-morrow."

The woman grumblingly took them in to her brother, who made no effort to rise from his chair and pretended not to hear what was being asked him. Thereupon Suzanne remarked :

"What a shame it is to see a worthy citizen like you one of Courbis's victims !"

At that name, the fierce *sans-culotte's* expression altered ; he made excuses, found chairs for his visitors, and asked them several questions. Apparently satisfied, he then wrote a very pressing letter that he handed them, saying :

"You will not be able to get the warrant for

arrest cancelled. You had better confine yourselves to begging a postponement, and Boisset will certainly not refuse you that. You have all my best wishes for your success."

On the following day, Madame and Mademoiselle Chabaud climbed on the coach, and arriving at Montpellier, obtained an interview at two in the afternoon with Boisset, who, despite the violent cough that racked his poor frail body, received them politely and made no hesitation about granting them the postponement they required.

Chabaud was free to leave his kindly hosts and return to his own home, and a few days later, in spite of the protests from the Popular Society, Courbis was relieved of his office of Mayor by Boisset and arrested while at dinner with Brunier, the advocate. This deposition caused an "astounding noise" and was hailed with vast relief by all the oppressed. However, this truce was of but very short duration, for the National Convention, swept on by its frenzied demagogues, could not stop striking without being struck itself. Boisset stayed on as People's Representative in Hérault and Aude, but, on the 3rd Ventôse, he was recalled to Paris. On the 3rd Pluviôse a fresh People's Representative, Borie-Cambord, arrived at Nîmes, on mission into the Gard and Lozère, and on the 9th Courbis was reinstated. There followed a merciless hunt of the Federalists, "those perverse men who had to be annihilated for the safety of the Republic." Over four hundred arrest-warrants were issued, houses were confiscated, homes violated ;

Magistracies, Tribunals, and Councils revised ; and a number of priests and pastors were forced to adjure. Borie set up a Revolutionary Committee of twelve members, almost all of whom were workmen, pure *sans-culottes* who saw conspirators and traitors in every direction.

People were afraid to go out for fear of being denounced, and it was imputed a crime to stay at home. Antoine Chabaud only left his home in the Rue des Tondeurs to go to La Tour and show himself to some honest labourers. From them he received the certificate of residence that had to be signed every three months if one wished to keep one's name off the list of refugees. One day, when he was away on the family estate, a stranger officer came to tell his sister in confidence that the order had been given to carry out searches in the châteaux of the neighbourhood. Suzanne at once got on a horse and made her way in haste to La Tour, where she heard shouting and saw a small crowd in the courtyard as she arrived. She was terrified that her brother had been arrested, but found that it was merely a group of peasantry pulling down a big plane-tree to plant a tree of Liberty on the Place de Beauregard, once called the Place de Saint-Chaptes. The false alarm was a warning, and everyone started telling Chabaud that he ought to make his escape.

"What will you do without me?" he asked his wife and sister. "If I go to Switzerland, my name will be inscribed on the list of refugees, and you will both be arrested,"

"No, for we shall come and join you."

"Yes," he retorted, "and I shall see you starving for lack of food! Let them arrest me and judge me! Have I not an indisputable defence? All the good souls I commanded . . ."

"Are cowed by these monsters!"

"Well, I am not cowed, at any rate."

Several friends of Chabaud's were already in prison. Dassas had been arrested on the 22nd Frimaire; Soulier, the pastor, on the 3rd Germinal, Fléchier on the 4th; Rolland was hiding in his cellar, awaiting a favourable opportunity to get away to Geneva. Chabaud, too, was expecting to be taken any day, and had put some sort of order into his papers. It was not before the 14th, however, that the ushers knocked at his door. Realizing why they had come, he received them with courtesy and then dismissed them, giving his word that he would surrender himself their prisoner in an hour.

"If I were only sure that you would be left safe in prison until the coming of peace!" Suzanne told him.

"I!" he replied gaily. "Three months of prison is not a very ideal existence!"

Then, with a kiss to the two women who were weeping bitterly, he set out for the Citadel.

II

IT WAS TWO IN THE AFTERNOON when Antoine Chabaud presented himself at the Citadel which, for the last seven months, since the 11th Vendémiaire, Year II, to be accurate, had been used as a prison for seducers and traitors. This Citadel, or the Fort, as it was better known to the Nîmois, had been erected after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to defend the town that it overlooked from the north against a possible attack from the Religionaries. Of regular construction after Vauban's design, without towers or battlements, and imposing only insofar as its massiveness and solidity were concerned, it was situated at a place called Créval between the Mont-Duplin and the Mont-Cavalier, and its foundations were set deep in the rock. Built in the shape of a great square with projecting bastions at each corner, connected by bare flanking walls eighteen feet high, it had for some time remained deserted in its wilderness, surrounded by windmills whose white wings swung gently in the breath of the sea-breeze or raced to the gusts of the Mistral.

Chabaud crossed the drawbridge thrown over the moat, where there was a little stagnant water but which was mostly choked with an impenetrable

barrier of brambles. A few *sans-culottes* in red bonnet and carmagnole were roaming round the ramparts. Stating his reasons for entering to the sentries who stopped him, he was taken to the Registry that had formerly been the guardroom, with the Fort-Commander's quarters overhead, but now both quarters and guardroom were in the occupation of André, the Chief Warder of the Prison. Previous to the Revolution, this André had been a chairmaker, idle and drink-sodden, living a wretched existence with a large family, but being able to shout louder than the others in the Revolutionary Clubs, and finding it easier to assimilate the big empty phrases and appeals to violence of the demagogues, had from them secured this position that he had made very lucrative to himself by selling at high prices the favour of not being bullied, to the prisoners. The reception he accorded to the former Commandant of the National Guard when the latter came to surrender to his parole was distinctly offensive, as, joking and swearing, he informed him that he would be inscribed on the registers of inmates as being accused of emigration. The young man, seeing his case thus falsely aggravated, showed the certificate of residence that his sister had got for him the day before from the Headquarters of the Department, but André would not give way, and high words ensued. Chabaud possessed a terrible voice and extraordinary strength, and possibly the gaoler feared a scandal, that the prisoner might escape him, or maybe he let himself be convinced

by the only kind of argument he was used to bow to. In any case, he finally gave in, and consented to note on the register that the Citizen Antoine Chabaud was merely a "suspect and a federalist"—either of them sufficient charges to bring him before the new Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, who would pass him on, like Cardonnet, Baisson, Colomb, Belle, and Griolet the elder, to Vachale, an executioner quick and skilled beyond the ordinary, bearing on his National Guard's uniform the bloody stains of the trade he carried on with such zeal. All the aforementioned prisoners who were executed on the 15th Germinal were Protestants, with the exception of Belle, the printer, and one of them is said to have told his Judges, "We prefer our position to yours."

In the Citadel Chabaud found a number of his co-religionists whom Courbis had had arrested after their defeat at Pont-Saint-Esprit, on the terrible charge of having conspired against the solidity and indivisibility of the Republic. Of a religious turn of mind for the most part, believing themselves the Chosen of God, and that their faith and not their deeds would count to them, they had showed great enthusiasm in doing what they thought was right, and whatever they laid their hands to they carried out as a natural result of their faith. Men of action and business, the prosperity of their particular enterprises and the experience they had gained in commerce had given them confidence in success, but suddenly transported from their shops to political life, fresh to glory and

public affairs, where they found their business acumen useless, their learning insufficient and their thoughts too slow, they became involved in events without understanding them, and played their parts without ever discerning where they would lead them. Their cold reasoning, sense of reality, strict judgment, and other divers solid and hereditary qualities that had been handed down from generation to generation were fatal to them at a time of extraordinary upheaval, where nothing happened according to expectation. They did not realize that their cause was lost for them after August 10th, and, unlike others, had not the foresight to abandon it. Committing one fault after the other, conspiring against a Constitution they had sanctioned, eliminating from their enfranchisement the very people who had raised them to power, administering when they should have been fighting, they were not ready when the hour for battle struck.

Disdaining to flee, through love of their country or fear of misery, they were arrested one after the other. It was an era of persecutions such as had never been seen before. The cells of the Capuchin Monastery, the Palace and the Citadel were filled with Protestants; at the Citadel, the men were shut up in the Northern Bastions, the end of the Courtyard, and also in the Armoury, the Chapel, and the captain's quarters, whilst a part of the old barracks and the Town Bastion was reserved for women.

Antoine Chabaud was taken to a narrow cell where eight truckle-beds were touching each other,

and whose inmates were, like him, charged with federalism. They lived in "touching" intimacy, helping each other, and taking turns at sweeping the cell and preparing the meals. Whilst all showed courage and resignation, the greater part retained the gaiety of happier days and were making the best of their present position. Their days were spent in reading, writing, playing cards or taking a short walk along the ramparts, but they could not communicate with the other prisoners except in the courtyard at exercise time. Such isolation of the cells brought about strange relations. In 1792, when the Protestants came into power they had had the refractory priests imprisoned. There were a certain number of these who had been transferred to the Citadel and welcomed them without any rancour. At the beginning of the Revolution, Huguenots and Papist had sung *Te Deums* in the churches and psalms together in public places, but this Utopian state of things only lasted a little while, and the blood spilled during the affray had upset the reconciliation. Now they were linked together by Fate, associated in the same persecution, and trying to do each other justice on the road to Death.

Whilst the places of detention were by no manner of means "pleasure resorts," as the *sans-culottes* of the Popular Society used to complain, it is certain that all the favours of André, the gaoler, could be obtained at the Citadel for money. He constituted himself servant of the wealthy, invited them to his table, put his children at their disposal

for errands in town, and if, like his colleague Allien of the Capuchins, he would not allow them to go out during the night, he permitted them meetings in the actual precincts that lasted just as long as the price paid him was high.

The prisoners could draw their rations at the Canteen or have them brought in from outside, but if, in accordance with a decree made by Borie, the People's Representative, the poorer ones claimed the fifteen sous they were allowed for their subsistence, André repaid them by refusing to let their dinner in, under the pretext that they had no need to eat, so that, amongst his "paying-guests," some were treated with an abundance that savoured of luxury, whilst others lacked even their daily bread.

At midday and at six every evening there was a rush of prisoners to the main gate of the Citadel to see their relatives and friends, who then brought them parcels. Twice a day, Chabaud's wife and sister climbed the fortified ways leading to the Fort, waiting, basket on arm, before the gate formerly known as the Royal Gate, whose approaches were encumbered with a crowd mainly composed of women whose heroic privations in these times of scarcity allowed them to bring the prisoners food or even by some miracle, a few *assignats* or a little money. Be it understood, all visitors were not treated alike. They must possess the means to buy André's favour before being permitted to cross the drawbridge and speak a few words to the prisoners, but if they succeeded in getting thus far, it was

as though they had won a victory, and their hard-won happiness dissipated for a little while the sombreness of their thoughts.

It would occasionally happen that a sentry who knew and liked Chabaud would prudently move off to a distance, and at such times Suzanne could talk longer to her brother and the other prisoners. She used to go up to the Citadel with the daughters and nieces of Monsieur d'Azémar, one of the first to be imprisoned and whose long detention had not altered his good humour. Before the gate she would meet the wife of Soulier, a pastor who set his fellow-bondsmen the example of tolerance and faith in God by chatting in the courtyard to the Abbé Chapus, formerly Curé of Saint-Ambrose, about matters far above the passions and anguish of human nature. Common sufferings and a similar fate had accomplished this miracle of bringing enemies to a state of brotherhood, where nobles like the Baron d'Aigaliers were helped by wretched workmen, Republicans were assisting Royalists, and Protestants were praying with Catholics.

The prisoner's relatives took no account of danger so long as they might visit the Citadel. Despite her natural shyness and timidity of character, Madame Fléchier never missed a single opportunity of going to see her son, César Fléchier, who, a cousin and long-standing friend of Chabaud's, had refused flight, fearing lest his mother might be put in prison in his stead, and whose sole care, since his arrest on the 4th Germinal, had been to reassure her so that she might worry less. In the same way,

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David Arnaud welcomed his wife with words of hope, and knowing her to be "more useful to their six children than him," refused the plans for escape she was constantly offering him.

The prisoners were not of the same opinion regarding the future, for whereas some thought that they could not possibly escape death, others displayed an impatient keenness to be judged, believing that no one would be able or would dare to condemn them for want of proofs. Antoine Chabaud belonged to the latter class, and therefore when she could spend a few moments alone with him, instead of buoying him up with lying hopes, his sister used to seize every opportunity of frightening him out of his alarming attitude of security. "It was," wrote she, "a painful but useful act of courage, since I was occupied only with the thought of getting him to escape and leave France, if he could think of any means of leaving the country."

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At the time of Chabaud's arrest his property had been forfeited, his sister's fortune seized, and his wife's marriage portion sequestrated, thus Madame and Mademoiselle Chabaud, who had always lived in ease, if not in luxury, were feeling the pinch of misery. They lived on one floor of their house in the Rue des Tondeurs with three servants whom they had not dared to deprive of shelter. One only of the three was of any use, and that was Louis, an old servant "full of devotion and zeal." The two others were purely passengers. Isabel groaned futilely over the dearth of food and the

difficulty of getting it, and being both abrim with curiosity and a chatterbox, she would have become a menace without meaning to be, if her weaknesses had not been known. As for Thomas, he was merely a poltroon, who was trying to leave a place whose cheer was meagre and whose service was compromising. The ladies had been careful not to touch the five hundred gold Louis they had hidden under the roof at the time of the searching. They started by selling a few personal possessions, but what they brought in was very soon exhausted, so then, in order to be able to continue to take the prisoner good food and the necessary ransom to the gaoler, they set themselves to work. Suzanne being a designer of some taste, and Julie, her sister-in-law, a skilful embroidress, they made police caps—fashionable head-dresses that men wore, with inscriptions and allegories. “I showed one that I had made up,” wrote Mademoiselle Chabaud. “I had embroidered on the material a cage with a bird escaping, having broken the thread attached to one of its feet. Below, I had been able to write, without any repugnance, the usual motto, *Vive la Liberté!* . . . Sheaves of corn and well-arranged bunches of flowers got me preference over a great many other workers, but the most that I could earn in my day’s work was fifty sous. It was very little, but with that *assignat* for fifty sous I could get a little fruit for my brother . . .”

The two women sacrificed themselves to provide for the “dear prisoner.” When the La Tour domain had been sequestrated, someone of their

workers had been kind enough to send them two enormous sacks, one full of turnips and the other of white haricots. For their dinner they had a soup made of haricots or turnips, and at supper a salad of turnips or haricots. Other provisions were far too dear, and, besides, there were not many on the market. The little they saw and were able to buy they carried up to the Citadel.

Apart from their visits to the Fort, they rarely quitted their dwelling, a gloomy two-storied house with an arched entrance, a wooden panelled stairway, and large rooms, paved with stone slabs, with windows looking out on the narrow Rue des Tondeurs and the Rue de l'Horloge. Through the panes of one of these windows, whose curtains were looped up, Suzanne and Julie could be seen at any hour of the day bending over their work. They spoke little, understanding each other by a look, and at times even, their worry and melancholy caused them to spend long hours without thinking, plying their needles with a purely mechanical gesture. As Julie was ailing and compelled, in the expectation of approaching maternity, to greater prudence, it was Suzanne who went out into the town to do the necessary errands.

Going out was both perilous and painful. Guards were coming and going, bearing torches and pikes, and pushing the frightened passers-by about. Patrols were conducting prisoners from the Citadel or the Capuchins to the Palais de Justice for their trials. In those narrow, pavementless streets, it was not an uncommon thing to find oneself face to

face with one of the Five of the terrible Tribunal. Baumes, the former Montprin notary, used to efface himself as much as possible by keeping close to the walls, ashamed of the murderous work he had not the courage to free himself from. Boudon walked along without seeing anyone, steeped in his madness that was like that of a maddened bear. The infamous Abbé Giret, known as the Tiger, by anagram of his name, cast a cruel look at those he elbowed. Sometimes it was Courbis who had to be saluted, as, surrounded by a noisy Court, he paraded through the town he had conquered by means of the scaffold.

Alas ! That guillotine, that was permanently erected beside a Liberty-tree on the Esplanade, was hardly ever at rest, for every week there was a fresh series of executions, and the blood that had already been shed would fill the flower-decked canals of La Fontaine. The judges used to go to Courbis to receive their daily orders, and those orders were always the same—Death. The Public Prosecutor saw his office simplified ; the accusation he read over, for form's sake, was without exception efficacious, and it was sufficient to be arraigned before the Tribunal to be condemned. Every afternoon about four o'clock the crowd seethed around the Palais de Justice, knitting women sitting on the steps of the approach, awaited the departure of the promised prey. A ruffle of drums, the clatter of musket-butts, terse orders, and then, surrounded by a hedge of guards, those about to die emerged from the old chapel with their hands

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bound behind them. They passed slowly on their last walk under the gate formerly known as Saint-Gilles, till they reached the Esplanade. Here the crowd howled insults, laughed or was silent as the spirit moved it, but there were always hundreds to gloat over the spectacle of that blade falling and falling again. When it was all over, a red-painted cart would come to fetch the bodies and heads of the decapitated and bear them, with mournful creaking of wheels, to the Cemetery of Plan du Mail outside the town.

On execution days, veritable orgies took place at Courbis's house that faced the Esplanade. Borie, the People's Representative, the Judges of the Tribunal, and the members of the Municipality and the Revolutionary Committee, used to gather there as at a pageant. They would show themselves at the windows, in feathered hat or red bonnet, with glass in hand, "to see if the heads of the condemned fell in the right way." "Good!" they would exclaim, as Vachale, the executioner, did the deed. "Good! That one fell properly. Let's go and have another drink!"

Alas! How many heads fell to the dreadful sarcasms of Courbis, who seemed to take a devilish pleasure at witnessing the death of the Protestants he detested, for it was against these especially that his venom was directed. One hundred and thirty-three Protestants, as against eighty-seven Catholics, perished, and the population of Nîmes was Catholic for the most part. Not that there was room in the Mayor's wretched soul for any vague religious

sentiment that might have engendered fanaticism, but it was because the Huguenots had been at the head of the City's affairs, because they were still wealthy, because he had suffered from their power, coveted their possessions which he desired for his own. They died with courageous exaltation, praying and singing hymns, lifting their hearts towards "their Heavenly Father," as wrote Mademoiselle Chabaud, who, seeing all those she had known and loved falling like the autumn leaves, tried every means to effect an escape for her threatened brother.

Chabaud had lost faith in Revolutionary Justice. His friend Guizot, at whose house he had laid hidden, had been taken away to the scaffold, and of the eight prisoners that shared his cell, three had been handed over to the Tribunal. Since his wife had given him the false assurance that she had obtained a passport to go with him, he had made up his mind to escape, but it seemed impossible to get out of the place he was shut up in. Prison discipline was now stricter ; it was no longer permitted to see the prisoners, but Suzanne nevertheless found a means of keeping in touch with her brother. Every one of the multitude of schemes she formed for his escape fell through at the last moment, disappointing but not discouraging the girl by their passing glimmers of false hope. After a fresh check, and as Chabaud had written her that more than once he had been able to elude the watchfulness of the sleepy sentries, she got a note through to him to tell him that failing a letter, she would send him a pale-blue waistcoat. "That waistcoat

would warn him that he must try to escape, even by the most perilous means rather than let himself be dragged before the Revolutionary Tribunal."

The success of the plans that Suzanne ceaselessly wrought over was subordinate to certain conditions that it was very difficult to render coincident. It was first necessary to get the fugitive out of the Citadel and then find a refuge, not only for him, but for those who might be suspected of aiding him; also, in order to elude the search that was certain to be made with a fine comb, there must be a means of getting Chabaud out of France, and he would never consent to go alone. If the prisoner found an isolated exit from the Citadel by which he might make his escape, then the cavern where he would have to hide was already occupied by other fugitives, and if Suzanne found a ship's captain willing to risk receiving the escaped prisoner on his boat, a sentry was sure to be posted at that point of the ramparts where the escape was to be made. Thus the pale-blue waistcoat, signal of escape, was many times replaced in the wardrobe whence it had been so joyfully removed.

Tired of all this at the last, the girl made up her mind to go into the Government Offices, the Popular Society, anywhere she might find assistance. A little trader named Thomas, one of the twelve of the Revolutionary Committee, had been pointed out to her as a worthy person, so she went to see him, and found him in his shop engaged in folding pieces of cloth. He was a tall, extremely thin man whose little eyes revealed neither wit nor malice.

"What can I do for you, Citizeness?" he asked.

"I have something to talk to you about."

He took her into his kitchen, where she interceded for her brother, but he appeared not to wish to understand, and hearing his dog scratching at the door, got up sharply to let him in.

"He's such a good dog, is Fino," said he. "Come, lie down here . . . here. . . . See how obedient he is. There is not a dog as intelligent as he is, I think."

"He is certainly a fine dog," agreed Suzanne, stroking the dog's head.

Her compliment brought a smile to Thomas's face, and after a moment's reflection, he said :

"I signed your brother's arrest warrant and I am really sorry I did so. He is a worthy man and not a bit proud, but I was told he was a feder . . . federalist, and seeing that I myself am a good patriot, I put my name at the bottom of the page. Now I am beginning to think I was not right, but still I fear I can do nothing to help you, for my colleagues do not listen to me. There is only one who settles everything, and that is Citizen Simon. Go and see him ; he likes wealthy women to call on him."

She immediately set off to Simon's, but that day the shop was closed, and the bookbinder was not sitting at his bench sticking and sewing as usual, but by dint of much knocking, Suzanne at last was opened to by Simon's wife, who took her to her husband's room. The man's every feature, his

limp, squint, and thin lips denoted cruelty. He was just finishing shaving.

"Sacré !" he said to his wife. "Don't bring anyone in here. I'm tired of hearing these whinings. They annoy me."

"Is it not natural," asked Suzanne, scarcely reassured by such a reception, "to address oneself to a man who is at the head of affairs ?"

"I will listen to you, Citizeness," replied Simon, knotting his tie before a little mirror that reflected his sinister face, "but I warn you that I shall not interest myself in your brother. I am firm and inflexible towards all those who have been traitors."

Then, rubbing his hands, he added with a coarse laugh :

"Your brother shall perish, like so many others . . . and a good thing, too !"

Hardly able to breathe, the girl forced herself to quell the tears that rose to her eyes out of shame before this repugnant brute. With hands clasped, she remained rooted to the spot, unable to move, till happily Simon's wife came to her assistance. She offered her arm and took her out to the door, murmuring as though to herself that word in dialect by which peasants express their pity for those in trouble as well as their impotence to help them :

"*Pecaïre !*"

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Never had there been so mild a spring. The beginning of the month of Floréal lent an unaccus-

tomed aspect to the country-side, bringing the fugitive grace of its mists and greenery to a land of bright light and clear horizons. The hard outlines of things were softened and it might have been thought that men's passions under the influence of a sky of tenderer colour were become less violent, since during the whole month there was not a single execution. It was not that Courbis's hardness of heart had been affected by the softness of the weather, but a decree of the National Convention had just dissolved the Provincial Tribunals, ordering "that all persons accused of conspiracy should be brought from every part of the Republic to the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris." Saint-Just, in order to get this decree through the Assembly, had pleaded "the weaknesses of the Judges," an extremely unjust reproach so far as the Jacobins of the Gard were concerned. The real motive was that Robespierre, having gained complete control of the Committees of Public Safety and General Security, desired to have all the machinery of the Government under his thumb.

Thus at Nîmes, if affairs were slack, the same thing applied to the Judges of the Tribunal, who could not admit that their services were indispensable. Without taking into account that they missed their fees and that, having given up their trades, the hours they were not sitting seemed unbearably long, *things were not the same when they were not working* for the safety of the Republic. Certain notorious persons amongst the accused had been dispatched to Paris, but it was impossible to

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send there every traitor, federalist and aristocrat. Meynier de Salinelles, the former Mayor of Nîmes, an old man of sixty-five, who was transferred to Paris on the 8th Floréal, was condemned to death on the 26th without a hearing. The prisons were full up, prisoners were still being put in but none taken out. The Popular Society was getting agitated, the Revolutionary Committee anxious, and the *sans-coulottes* could not get used to no longer going to the Esplanade to witness the "beheading of some *sacré Brissotin*."

In Paris, happily, things were getting to such a pitch that, despite Fouquier-Tinville's zeal and the suppression of all forms of legal procedure, the Tribunal had more than it could cope with. Even when the remaining vestiges of a trial were dispensed with, and as Herman wrote on the 17th Nivose, Year II, "given time and patience, we shall get through it," it was impossible to guillotine so many people. So the decree of the 27th Germinal was very soon revoked, and the old Judges, assembled in the Court-room of the Palais de Justice at Nîmes on the 4th Prairial, gave their heartiest applause to Borie, the Representative, who had just read out the minute from the Committee of Public Safety, re-establishing the Revolutionary Tribunal in the Departments. On the following day, President Pallejay, Courbis's brother-in-law, sat as formerly, with shy Baumes, honest Péliissier, and terrible Boudon; Giret once more insulted the prisoners whom Bertrand, the Prosecutor, had no trouble in getting condemned.

In the Shadows

From that date the Terrorist fury knew no bounds, and all law was suspended. Witnesses for the defence were no longer heard, even the defence was suppressed, and it was a rare thing for the accused to be questioned. There were three executions on the 6th Prairial—of Tortilia, a lawyer aged fifty; Balmelle, aged forty-three; and Cathelany, an ex-priest of sixty-five, who confessed the two others on the way—three again on the 8th, as many on the 11th, and twelve on the 15th. On this date all, with the exception of Boissière, were of the Protestant Faith, and Pastor Ribes, one of the condemned, exhorted them while they were walking to their death by singing psalms. There were thirty-one executions on the 29th Messidor, and the red cart kept on its journeys from the Esplanade to the Plan du Mail Cemetery. Whilst the executioner was robbing the victims' bodies, Courbis would come out of his house with his band, the men in panache and red bonnet, holding by the hand women decked in tricolour ribands, and gaily dance the Carmagnole around the guillotine.

Suzanne Chabaud had profited by the Floréal truce, and if none of her schemes had so far met with success, she had managed to supply her brother, hidden amongst clothes and food, all that he might need for his escape, such as cords, false keys, leather breeches, and a police bonnet, like ones worn by the National Guards. She had shown the prisoner the exact spot where the high walls of the Citadel, backing on to the hill, were

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lowest on account of the rise of the ground. She had even just submitted to him a fresh and well combined plan that was bound to succeed. All was in readiness, and she had already hired the horses needed for the flight from a namesake of her's, Chabaud, the tanner, an excellent fellow with red hair. Thus, on the afternoon of the 15th Messidor, Suzanne, sewing as usual at the window, and thinking that in three days her brother would be free, seemed less melancholy and a gleam of happiness crossed her face as she met her sister-in-law's look who was sitting opposite her.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door, discreet, but repeated. She got up and went to see what it was, and a man she had faith in entered the room.

"It is for to-morrow," said he. "The news is positive, certain. To-morrow, at eight in the morning, Chabaud will be brought before the Tribunal—and that means death—with his friend Fléchier, the cloth merchant, and three other Secretaries of the revolted Sections."

It was already past six o'clock, and late to think of seeing any of the Judges even if there were anything to be got out of them. Palleyay and Baumes trembled before Courbis, who was revered as a god by Boudon. Pélassier took part in the affray on the Catholic side, and, becoming afterwards a member of the Popular Society, never forgave the Protestants for molesting him at the time Federalism was supreme; and as for the Abbé Giret, he was a sinister brigand who revelled in death, as witness one day when on the way to the

Tribunal, he was overheard asking Courbis, "By the way, who are we starting off to the other world to-day?" There remained certainly Bertrand, the Public Prosecutor, who, son of a small apothecary of Bagnols, had got into debt through satisfying his luxurious tastes and his love of debauch, which left him "not insensible to matters of interest to him." He was, moreover, under the influence of a woman who had had obligations to the Chabaud family and who, although tainted by her liaison with the Terrorist and many others, had retained her kindness and sincerity. Overcoming her shame, Madame Chabaud suggested that she should go and see this woman, whilst Suzanne went to seek advice from Dupin, the poor man's lawyer, an excellent man who had secured an acquittal for a number of accused when yet pleading was permitted. He received Mademoiselle Chabaud with his usual kindness, but scarcely had she told him what brought her to his house, then he exclaimed quickly :

"Your brother is lost, yes, lost. No explanation is heard, the name alone is asked now. There is nothing to be done!"

She went away struggling to repress her grief, but when she arrived back at the Rue des Tondeurs, her sister-in-law had not returned. She waited a long time for her in suspense, and then Madame Chabaud came in disappointed, for the woman she had gone to see had told her :

"I have often tried to be useful to people. I get promises from Bertrand, but he never keeps them."

There was nothing left but immediate escape ; and Suzanne, without considering the lateness of the hour, fetched the pale-blue waistcoat from the wardrobe, and throwing a cloak over her trembling shoulders, hurried off to the Citadel. Alas ! Ten o'clock was striking as she reached the foot of the slope that led up to the drawbridge, the time the prison gates were closed. A sentry challenged her :

"Where are you going, Citizeness ? "

"To hand this little parcel to the gaoler."

"No parcels can be handed in at this time of the night."

"My brother is being taken before the Tribunal to-morrow, and I am bringing him what he needs. I have a heap of things to tell him by means of the gaoler, and it is sure to be him or his son who will do my errand for me. Please let me pass."

"Might you be Chabaud's sister ? "

"Yes, Citizen. It was he who commanded the National Guard. You all liked your comrade, and there were never any complaints made against him."

"Well, well, pass then."

She was now at the main gate that was partly open, but just as she was crossing the threshold, a National Guard thrust his bayonet across her path.

"There is no entry."

"Chabaud is to be judged to-morrow," she pleaded ; "he must be warned."

"You will see him at the Tribunal."

"At the Tribunal," she repeated in an altered voice,

" Might you be Chabaud's sister ? "

" Yes, the sister of him who loved you, but you will have no pity on him."

" He was a good commander, a decent fellow," approved the sentry, going off to fetch the gaoler. André presently came to the gate.

" You have often done my little errands for me," the girl told him. " Here is a small parcel for my brother that I beg you will hand him now."

" I will give it him to-morrow," André replied, with a yawn.

" He must have it this evening and as soon as possible, and will you please tell him that he is to be judged to-morrow and that he ought to spend the whole night in polishing up his memory."

" Well, really he ought to be allowed to sleep, since to-morrow . . ." making a frightful gesture, and smiling.

" André," said Suzanne, holding out a piece of silver—and silver was rare—to the gaoler, " for Heaven's sake, take this parcel to my brother and I will wait for his reply."

" André put the silver piece carefully into his pocket," wrote Mademoiselle Chabaud, " carried off the parcel, and I awaited his return at the gate of the Citadel. The moon was shining brightly in a cloudless sky, showing me the height of the rampart and the depth of the moat. Good Heavens, thought I to myself, this bright moonlight will certainly make things difficult for my brother."

André returned, and said :

" Your brother wants you to sleep quietly, and

says he has nothing to fear." (Here André smiled and rolled his head.) "He is supping at present with his friends, for they generally have their meal together before separating for the night."

"I thanked the obliging gaoler and returned from the prison, sometimes hurrying, sometimes stopping with fright. I was so distraught that once I looked under my arm for the pale-blue waistcoat which luckily had been passed to my brother."

Hardly had André left the cell than Chabaud opened the parcel and, recognizing the agreed signal, decided to get away at once. He communicated his plan to his companions, who assisted him to get out of the room by laughing and talking to cover the noise he made forcing the door. Putting on the police cap that his sister had brought him, he traversed the dark corridors and reached the courtyard. Here he mingled with the men of the guard, talked like them of traitors and aristocrats, and swore with them, disguising his voice, and then made his way quietly towards the main gate. Two sentries in succession allowed him to pass, on his reply of "Soldier on post" to their challenge of "Who goes there?" but unfortunately there was one sentry more than usual on that particular night, and the prisoner, not expecting this, was taken by surprise, thought himself lost, and made at top speed for the ramparts. Reaching the point he knew to be lowest, he threw himself into the dry moat, fell over, picked himself up, and looked back. His pursuer dared neither give

chase nor fire at the fugitive, who profited by his hesitation to slip amongst the green oaks of the plantation.

Not knowing where to go and as though driven by Fate, Chabaud, obeying that mysterious instinct that guides us in times of danger, walked across country, bending his tall body, keeping his breathing quiet, and deadening his footsteps. It was a splendid night and everything was almost as clear as by day. The moon lit up the sleeping town below, and the trees on the hill showed up as big, black smudges against the ground. There was no stir from behind, where the Citadel raised its massive form.

Arriving at some straight, tall cypresses, a low house with clumps of grenade-trees, he recognized the lonely enclosure where Suzanne had buried her mother and the little house that guarded the tomb, where she had lodged some good folk that her family had always helped. The fugitive leaped over the hedge and knocked once, and then again.

“Who is there?”

On speaking his name, a key turned in the lock, and he entered and was welcomed by Bernouin and his wife, the peasants who occupied the house. He told them briefly of his flight and begged the man to go at once and warn Madame and Made-moiselle Chabaud.

Midnight had just struck when Suzanne and Julie, praying in silence and hardly daring to breathe, heard the knocker on the street door. They immediately rose from their knees together.

“ He is saved,” exclaimed Chabaud’s wife. “ He is saved ! ”

The faithful Louis had gone to answer the door and soon entered with Bernouin, who did not wait to be questioned before gasping, for he was out of breath from hurrying :

“ He is at my house, Madame and Mademoiselle. He is all right, but he was chased. The alarm is certain to be sounded soon and the town searched. He must be got away quickly to a sure refuge.”

There was a short silence, and then Suzanne, with that expression of energy and will that one finds when, after suffering and struggle, one decides to take things calmly, said :

“ There is only that abandoned ruin near the Alais road. It is about a couple of leagues from here and so hidden in the brambles that only Rosette, the little seamstress who found it with me, could take my brother there. She is so young that if they are caught on the way, no one will dare to harm her. Go, Bernouin, please, as far as Rosette’s place. She is devoted to us as you are, for we have already proved her.”

The man went, but as he was about to address the seamstress—

“ Hush ! ” she said, “ and make no noise. My father is in the next room. He is a *sans-culotte*, and if he woke up, he would certainly stop me from helping the prisoner.”

Dressing herself and going out carefully, she went to the enclosure, which was at some distance, saw Chabaud, and set out with him. The brave

girl's heart was beating fast, her head was on fire, and she was so worried that she lost her way and found herself back at the gates of the town just as day was breaking. She had wandered for several hours, frightened at everything, mistaking an olive-tree for a gendarme, quivering at the slightest noise. She prayed aloud all the time, and when she got over-agitated, made the sign of the Cross. Eventually getting her bearings, she brought the fugitive to the ruin, where she hastily left him, telling him not to be alarmed if he were to be left a little while without food or news.

By what miracle had Chabaud got out of the Citadel so easily, and what was the explanation of there being no pursuit after him? In spite of his disguise, it seems impossible that he could have mixed with the soldiers of the guard without being recognized by them, and it is certain that, as his escape was made about midnight, if the alarm had been given immediately, he could not fail to have been caught before finding the ruin that he only reached in the morning. The truth was that the soldiers on guard, worthy folk who resented being used as policemen, facilitated the escape of their old comrade by a sort of tacit agreement. The sentry who ran after him on the ramparts might have called out or fired, but his inaction was comprehensible to those who knew him for the inn-keeper with whom the horses hired for Chabaud the day before had been baited. He even took his time about going to arouse the gaoler.

"A prisoner escaped *just now*," he reported.

"It's not possible," André replied. "I've made my rounds and there was no one missing."

André was drunk, and it was therefore easy for the captain of the post, Teissier, the printer, to persuade him that the first thing he ought to do was to call the roll to find out. As there were over four hundred prisoners in the Citadel, opening the cells one by one, waking up the prisoners and identifying them took several hours. As luck would have it, Chabaud's was one of the last to be visited, and when André had called the roll there he started shouting in a frightened voice, as he rubbed his eyes :

"Chab . . . big Chabaud . . . has escaped !"

Cells, corridors, and courtyard resounded with his lamentable cry, but it was now too late to order a pursuit, and the gaoler, swearing and moaning, had to content himself with drawing up a report that he sent off at once to the Mayor and the President of the Revolutionary Committee. It was more than two hours after Chabaud had fallen asleep in the ruin with his head resting on a big stone that Courbis received this report and fell into a fit of rage.

"I would rather a hundred other prisoners had escaped than that one !" he shouted ; "but I'll have him yet !"

He had the alarm drums beaten, and ordered house-to-house visits to be made. Chabaud's description was sent to the communes, and spies beat the roads, La Tour was searched, and the

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house in the Rue des Tondeurs was ransacked from top to bottom. Lamé Simon ran through the streets with a flag, reading a proclamation putting all those who afforded sanctuary to the fugitive outside the law, and promising, moreover, to whoever might find him, a thousand francs from the Municipality and three hundred francs out of his own pocket.

The whole town was in consternation, and folks avoided passing through the Rue des Tondeurs. "No one would have dared to lend a hand if the house had caught on fire" where Madame and Mademoiselle Chabaud, receiving nobody, waited all the while for the warrant of arrest that Courbis, in his rage at seeing his prey escape him, would not fail to draw up against them.

III

AMONGST THE *SANS-CULOTTES* who enjoyed the Mayor's intimacy and partook of his brutal debauches, there were some, strange though it may appear, in whom the voice of conscience was not completely stilled. One of these, Blachie, a Protestant whom low ambition had separated from his co-religionists and the horrible dread of being guillotined had thrown into the camp of the murderers, was with Courbis at the moment the Nîmois potentate was about to sign a double warrant of arrest for the two Chabaud women. Usually obstinate or yielding, Blachie, with a sudden prick of conscience, had a feeling that it would be an abominable thing to send to prison, perhaps death, two inoffensive women whom he had known from childhood. Realizing that it was impossible to save both, the thought that Madame Chabaud would be reprieved for a few months on account of her condition, caused him to tell Courbis :

“ Arrest the fugitive's wife, well and good, but her sister, that's impossible just at present. She is very ill, and has just had poultices applied to her. Her turn must wait ! ”

Courbis, deceived by his words and not doubting

his faithful companion, tore up the warrant applying to Suzanne. The girl was advised by Blachie of what he had done for her, and though at first indignantly refusing to play the part she would have to, she eventually yielded to the urgent prayers of her sister-in-law, who told her :

“Do not think of me, do not think of yourself, think only of my husband. What will become of him if you are arrested ?”

It therefore happened that when the ushers presented themselves at the Rue des Tondeurs, they found the “Citizeness Verdier Lacoste, wife of Chabaud-Latour,” ready to start for the Fort, and in her bed, sick indeed at not being able to follow them, Suzanne, who had great difficulty in withholding her tears in front of them. They showed themselves kindly towards a prisoner who had no compunction about paying into their hands the thirty-six Livres it cost suspects for the privilege of being arrested, and withdrew for a few minutes, which the two women utilized by agreeing on means they hoped to be able to employ to communicate with each other.

Surrounded with gendarmes, with calm face and dry eyes, Julie then left her home on foot, and traversed the Rue du Petit-Soulier, the Place aux Herbes, the Rue Castor and the Rue des Lombards, that were gloomy and deserted. Reaching the Cours, she requested permission of her guards to go and see her mother, and this being accorded, she went off, but returned sobbing a few minutes later. On seeing her, it appears that Madame

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Verdier, whose husband and brother-in-law were in prison, and whose sons and sons-in-law were refugees, had recoiled with fright, exclaiming :

“Wretched girl ! Be off quickly. You are compromising me !”

At the Citadel, Julie was shut in the entrance building, next to the drawbridge and overlooking it. For a few days she was left alone in her cell, and was then allowed to mix with the other women-prisoners, who were not very numerous, most of them having been already transferred to the *Sommières House of Detention*.

At the same time as Madame Chabaud, there had been arrested the three sentries on guard on the night of the 15th-16th Messidor ; Teissier, the captain of the post ; Chabaud, the tanner, who had lent the horses ; and also Thomas, the fugitive's former servant, although it was some time since he had quitted his dangerous position. In the case of André, found guilty of not giving the alarm at once, he was confined in the very prison where he was serving as gaoler, and it may therefore be easily guessed that the particular mark chosen for his vengeance was Madame Chabaud. “For the first three days he would not allow her to have the food her sister-in-law sent her, and even when she was terribly thirsty, he wanted to refuse her water, but the sentries themselves were disgusted at the display of so much malice towards a woman who was soon expecting to be a mother, and forced André to behave better in that respect. They could not, however, silence his bitter tongue, for

every time the roll of a drum was heard he would say to the unfortunate women :

"Listen, there is the drum. . . . It's being beaten for someone on their way to death. . . . Perhaps it's for your husband. You know, that's the music they get, those traitors, when they are on the scaffold," or else he would remark, "It's your husband being taken to the Tribunal . . . to death perhaps. A good thing, too !"

Once he surprised her tenderly gazing at a portrait of her husband that she always wore about her in a medallion.

"See," he exclaimed, "see this wretched woman looking at that villain's portrait !"

By great good fortune there was one prisoner, a Madame Villard, who had been imprisoned since the 15th Messidor, who saved the poor woman all that might have been painful or dangerous for her, by making her bed, sweeping her room, and going to draw water for her from the courtyard, darkened by its vast surrounding wall, where the prisoners used to gather for recreation around the central well whose lip rose out of the dusty ground. There Madame Chabaud met her uncle, Henri Verdier ; d'Azémar, her guardian ; and other relatives and friends ; but her father was too weak to go out, and could never get André's permission for his daughter to go and see him.

It was when night came that the prisoner was least worried and unhappy, for then she could spend long hours leaning against the embrasure of her little window. Down below her lay the town,



ANTOINE CHABAUD DE LATOUR, WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.

(About 1805.)

(After a painting attributed to Gérard in the possession of the Baronne de Chabaud-La Tour.)

with the low, tiled roofs of its houses nestling close to each other, the tower of its ancient Cathedral and those of the Carmelite and Capuchin Monasteries, the Maison Carrée, and, further off, the Arenas, the outlines of whose dark mass were blurred by the evening mists. As darkness fell, lights appeared one by one, and later, when they were all extinguished, the young woman, gazing earnestly through the bars of her cell in the direction of the Rue des Tondeurs, would catch sight of a spot of light between the Cathedral and the Clock Tower that seemed brighter and nearer than the others had been. It was Suzanne, who not being able to get out of doors during the day, used to go up to the attic of her house to let her sister-in-law know by the prearranged signal that she was not forgotten ; and if the little lamp lifted three times and then vanished, it was a sign that the girl intended to profit by the darkness to slip out into the streets of the town and make a further effort to get the brother she had already saved from the scaffold out of the deserted ruin.

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Suzanne, prevented by her pretence of sickness from getting up during the daytime, had not dared even during the night to go and see her brother in case such imprudence might betray the hole he was hiding in, so that it was a peasant who was charged with the errand of taking food to the prisoner. The heat was so intense, owing to the ruin being half-smothered with bushes and brambles, that food would not keep very long there, and so

it was necessary to send things that were easy of portage and not likely to go bad. Chabaud would have been quite content with the brown bread and cheese that he got and the sharp wine to drink, but his situation was extremely uncomfortable. The walls of the old cellar were full of holes, and the roof was bending under the weight of weeds growing on it, whilst through several places where it had given way, the rays of a pitiless sun poured in and, being reflected by the ground, gave off a most exhausting heat. What time the young man, so tall that his head nearly touched the rafters, was not prowling up and down his tiny lair like a caged lion, he lay on the hard, burning soil, wearing out his eyes by gazing at the sky that seemed ever of the same wearying clearness and purity though the holes in the roof. Heat, the insects with which he was devoured, lack of exercise, and insufficient food had shaken his nerve and reduced his courage almost to vanishing point, so that on occasions this sturdy soldier, who would have been the first to mount to the assault, shook with fear. The most distant noises, even the rustling of a leaf tossed by the wind, filled his soul with dread, and if, on the other hand, there was dead silence he became overwhelmed with a kind of horror and a vivid desire to get out of his lonely retreat that seemed like a silent tomb and shout aloud to break the stillness. All through the clammy nights he suffered from dreadful nightmares, dreaming that his wife and sister were guillotined on the Esplanade, and reproaching himself on awaking for the cowardly

inaction he was forced to undergo. Twenty-four hours after his arrival he had received two letters, one from Julie, the other from Suzanne, and then when three days passed without any being brought him by the peasant who had been carefully instructed not to tell him of Madame Chabaud's arrest, he fell into a violent temper and scribbled the following note in pencil with the aid of the moonlight :

"I cannot bear the thought that you are suffering for me, nor can I agree to buy my life at such a price. I have made up my mind, if one of you is arrested, to give myself up, so unless I receive two letters soon, I shall resign myself to death !"

"On reading that note," wrote Mademoiselle Chabaud, "I was just as stunned as though the blade that threatened my brother had fallen on me instead, until all at once a brilliant thought, doubtless inspired by Him who had blessed all my undertakings, came to my help. When I wrote with great speed and a bad pen, my writing was something like Julie's, so with the assistance of a few old letters of hers and some bad pens, and doing my very utmost to imitate her handwriting, I succeeded in turning out a note that seemed to emanate from her, and I made it short. I also scribbled another from myself, longer and more carefully written, and dispatched both to my brother, full of dread lest my ruse might be detected, but it succeeded beautifully. Later I received my brother's reply, in which he expressed

the keenest joy at knowing us both at liberty, and finished with these words, 'I realize how valuable and worth living my life is, now that I know I need not fear for your freedom.' "

Little Suzanne, who seemed so frail, with her pale face and small deformed body, was both skilful and plucky, and kept her heart steady and her mind clear in those difficult times, when the driest eyes were shedding tears and the steadiest heads were confused. She had to keep to her bed all day long and, when kind friends came to visit her out of curiosity, had to complain of imaginary sickness, close her eyes, listen to the different remedies of the gossips, and have medicines and poultices brought in their presence. When she spoke, it was in prepared speeches to disappoint the inquisition that Courbis had not abandoned, and to this end she let it be understood by her tenant, Madame de F——, a most estimable person but a chatterbox, that Chabaud had got away to Genoa.

"I am not so ill as I was, and I am quieter in my mind," she admitted. "Indeed . . . but there, I cannot tell you any more."

"I understand, I understand," interrupted the good woman; "I am very glad that he has got away. Of course, I shall say nothing to anyone."

She certainly said nothing, but her gestures and her reticence led folks to believe that Chabaud had managed to get aboard a boat and escape, and Courbis, certain that such an embarkation had not

taken place but was in all probability planned, diverted his searchers in the direction of Aigues-Mortes.

All this time, Suzanne was trying to facilitate her brother's departure for Switzerland. At night, after ten o'clock, when all the lights were extinguished and her tenants abed, she climbed to the attic, a sort of open place used for drying the linen, whence she could look out over the town and see the windows of the Fort. After waving her lantern, she waited till the watchmaker, whose house was close by, came over the roofs to give her an account of what news he had picked up during the day. Then with her head swathed in a *thérèse* and "the whole of her little person enveloped in a coloured cloak with a plaited girdle, and looking every bit like some worthy servant," she would slip out by a side-door, sometimes with her man Louis, who served her with great devotion, sometimes with a retired grenadier who was deeply attached to Antoine Chabaud. Sometimes it happened that there were people in the streets, but a "grenadier swearing in Provençal dialect and a girl of the people" holding tenderly to his arm were not likely to attract much attention. In this way Suzanne managed to see Madame Rolland and Mesdemoiselles Baguet, Jourdan, and d'Azémar, and take counsel with them, and learning that a friend of her mother's, a Madame Paulian, "whose ripe age, kindness, and discretion were calculated to inspire confidence," was, doubtless on account of the position held by her husband, in

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touch with the mail carriers, she determined to go and see her. The lady received her with interest.

"I know two men," she said, "who could be trusted, but you will need a passport!"

A long time before, Suzanne, who never left anything to chance, had provided herself with the necessary printed forms that she had had stamped and sealed herself. Just before the house was searched, she had hidden these with the little store of gold remaining to her under the roof, and her despair may be imagined when, on going to recover them, she found the wax of the seals had melted. The seals being very difficult to counterfeit, and it being out of the question to ask for fresh ones at the Departmental Offices, she went that same evening to see an engraver, but the man refused to carry out the dangerous service requested of him, and despite the girl's prayers and supplications, she could not persuade him.

"Oh well," she said, going out, "my brother will die and *you* will be responsible for his murder. I shall come here every day to reproach you for his death!"

The engraver had seen a number of his friends guillotined, and once upon a time he had been a great friend of Antoine Chabaud's, and had offered him sanctuary in his house. He yielded, and the following day the seal was finished and attached to the passport according to regulation, and the grenadier, who accompanied Suzanne on her nocturnal ramblings, on his way to find Chabaud in

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his ruin and escort him to Remoulins, a quiet village where the mail stopped about midnight.

Unfortunately they lost their way in the country lanes, and reaching the relay station at last, found that the mail had passed an hour before, so there was nothing to do but to return to the ruin. Shivering with fever, exhausted with weariness, and with aching feet, the fugitive found great difficulty in getting along, and as the day began to break, he refused to walk another step, and went to seek refuge of a labourer whose cottage was close at hand. The only two classes of people at that time were traitors or terrorists, and as the peasant opened his door :

“You are perhaps one of those good people they are killing?” he asked.

“Yes,” replied Chabaud, “I am one of those unfortunates.”

Thereupon he said who he was, and as his name was well known, he was given some clean linen, good soup and a bed, whilst the grenadier returned to Nîmes to tell Suzanne of the check to their enterprise. She was quite disheartened by the news, for she was tired of struggling against Fate, and wanted to give herself up as a prisoner, but Dupin, the advocate, whom she saw during the night, turned her from her plan.

“You really make me tremble,” he said. “It appears that you envy your sister the pleasure of being shut up for the man she loves. Her rôle is touching, I grant you, but think how useful and necessary you are. Nothing is lost as yet.”

Indeed, a few days later, Antoine Chabaud reached Remoulins in time, and, thanks to "an honest courier" whom Madame Paulian had warned to expect him, mounted on the coach and set out for Switzerland.

Suzanne wanted to let her sister-in-law know the good news at once, and in the impatience of her joy, quite forgetting that it was forbidden her to show herself out of doors, she dashed off to the Citadel, but learned on the way that the prisoner had been taken to the Palais de Justice for examination. She was too late also to see her there, for the examination was over when she arrived, so she made her way home again, "without having been seen by any ill-intentioned person," contenting herself, after due reflection, with sending to the Fort a parcel whose rose ribbon told Madame Chabaud of her husband's departure.

The fugitive had still to reach the frontier without being arrested on the way. At Carouge members of the Revolutionary Committee demanded his passport and allowed him to continue his journey, but not before pressing him with questions that he had no difficulty in answering. At Geneva, where the Terror was at its height, he succeeded, after paying them well, in coming to an understanding with two boatmen, who conveyed him in a sailing boat to Lausanne. He was saved.

Suzanne Chabaud had arranged with one of the chief clerks of the Post that any letters coming from Switzerland should be given her in secret, and she thus learned without delay of the fortunate

arrival, but she was informed at the same time that her sister-in-law was to be brought up for trial.

Almost every evening she went to see Dupin, whose house was at some distance from the Rue des Tondeurs, and with him prepared the defence he thought he might be able to put up at the Tribunal. The advocate was a "zealous Catholic" whom "an ardent faith drove to succour those who were suffering all around him." The religious quarrels seemed very petty to Suzanne as she realized that he was much closer to her than many of her co-religionists, this believer who, like her, put all his trust in God. He gave himself up wholly to the dangerous task of defending the Protestant lady whom Death was threatening, saw the Judges of the Tribunal, took Suzanne to two of the jurors whom he knew, and obtained their promise of assistance. On her side, the girl took all the necessary steps she could, but the fury of the Terrorists was redoubling, and over four thousand persons were in prison. Thirty-one accused from Beaucaire had been beheaded on the 30th Messidor; and on the 1st Thermidor, all those who had been on the Town Council of Nîmes at the Federal Epoch were brought to the scaffold. There were twenty of them—Arnaud David, Jean Vals, Noguier, Bergeron, and Colomb, who was ill at the time—and the executioner stripped them even of their shoes. Not a day passed without its executions, for there was one on the 6th Thermidor, one on the 7th, four on the 10th, two on the 11th, four on the 12th, one on the 15th, and five on the

16th. The evidence of witnesses thay had never seen was used against the accused ; and on the 14th Thermidor, President Pallejay refused to hear any evidence for the defence. Dupin was afraid he might not be allowed to speak, and began to lose his assurance as the day of judgment drew near.

"They only want victims," he said. "She is sure to be condemned !"

"Oh !" replied Suzanne more confidently ; "that will be the first time they will have condemned a woman ; and even if she were condemned, she could not be guillotined at once. She will have at least seven weeks to live, and a great deal can happen in seven weeks. Then there is God, Monsieur Dupin, and I believe you know that all my hopes are centred in Him alone !"

The 18th Thermidor arrived at last. The preceding night had been filled with alarms, for there was talk of massacres in the prisons, patrols were constantly passing through the streets, and the calls of the sentries as they answered each other at frequent intervals had kept the restless town awake all night. The jurors of the Revolutionary Tribunal were just arriving in the Court-room of the Palais de Justice—simple folk for the most part, neither better nor worse than anyone else, who through fear or contagious frenzy had for the last four months condemned all those whom Courbis had instructed them to condemn without any pangs of conscience. To-day, there were to be brought before them the nine persons accused of

complicity in the Citizen Chabaud-Latour's escape, and they were just as prepared as they had been in the cases of the thirty-one accused from Beaucaire and the twenty of the 30th Messidor, to give the verdict they were expected to. The benches were thronged with an eager crowd composed mainly, even if there were a few friends of the prisoners hidden among them, of hangers-on and hags who would presently make their way to the Esplanade to dance round the guillotine.

An usher announcing the Tribunal, Pallejay, Baumet, Boudon, and Pélissier took their places behind a table on a raised dais, with Bertrand, the Public Prosecutor, and Millon, the Registrar, sitting in front of and below them. At Nîmes the Judges did not wear a special costume and big plumed hat as at Paris, but they all had on a carmagnole with bright metal buttons, with a tricolour or scarlet waistcoat and red bonnet; but that particular day it seemed as though their faces were paler beneath their blood-coloured head-dress, and that there was no longer that blending of cruelty and assurance in their eyes that made the whole hall tremble as at a blast of the Mistral, when they entered. Then, under the escort of gendarmes, the prisoners, nine in number, eight men and one woman, made their appearance. The "Citizeness Julie Verdier-Lacoste, wife of Chabaud-Latour," was more at her ease than the other accused, some of whom in expression and gesture showed their hostility towards her. There was no pallor on her cheeks, her features had nothing set

or embarrassed about them, but she was as she was, "of a natural distinction in her simple dress and crossed scarf." Her eyes were neither lifted towards Heaven nor cast on the ground, and if at times her gaze slipped quickly over the crowds, it was to throw a smile at some friend or relative she had glimpsed there. Not far from the young woman André was sitting, not greatly perturbed by his appearance in the Court, for he was certain of an acquittal, only having been summoned for form's sake in accordance with the Law of the 13th Brumaire, and was gloating in anticipation over the spectacle of the wife of the man who had played him such a trick being dragged to the scaffold. Placed next to him were the sentinels who had been on guard at the Citadel on the night of the 15th Messidor ; Barbusse, a stocking-maker ; Pin, the innkeeper ; Bigot, an agriculturist ; and Thomas, the servant who left the house in the Rue des Tondeurs in fear of not being paid, a fact that could not fail to merit the indulgence of the Judges ; and, last of all, Chabaud, the devoted tanner, and Teissier, captain of the guard, "an honest man not disguising his worthy sentiments."

When President Palleyjay, Courbis's brother-in-law, had declared that he would be quite "inflexible" in this business, he proceeded to the examination with a kindliness that had never been known in him before. When he had finished, Bertrand rose, pale and haggard like the Judges, and his voice was not so hard nor his speech so short and cutting as it had been the day before. He rapidly

laid out the facts of the case, accusing no one, and finally arriving at the conclusion that the "accused were not proven of being either the authors or the accomplices of an escape that was the result of unforeseen circumstances," asked for a verdict of acquittal.

At first astounded by such an inexplicable change of conduct, and then swayed by a sudden wave of pity, the gossips who were getting ready to shriek insults at the accused, applauded them as they retired. The President then, standing up, addressed the jury, starting with the youngest :

"Do you agree that Louis Bigot, Guillaume Pin . . . and the Citizeness Verdier-Lacoste should be found guilty of having favoured the escape of Citizen Chabaud ?"

"No," they answered one after the other, and after each brief word of freedom, a murmur of approval ran through the hall.

Once more the accused were brought in, the President read out the finding, and then the hall rang with applause, spectators invaded the dock, embracing those who had just been acquitted, complimenting and acclaiming them.

Lawyer Dupin had forbidden Suzanne to go to the Tribunal, so the girl had not been present at either the trial or the finding, but had learned the good news on her way to the Palais de Justice. She had great difficulty in forcing a passage through the noisy crowd that tried to stop her and overwhelm her with congratulations, shouting, "They are acquitted, they are free !" Weeping from

sheer joy, she kissed her sister-in-law and brought her in the midst of an admiring throng to the house in the Rue des Tondeurs where, an hour before, no one would have dared knock, and which until eleven o'clock in the evening was packed with folks coming and going, who wanted to be told over and over again all the incidents of the trial. Every one was asking what could have happened to alter the Judges' mentality, and it was supposed that grave events had taken place, although no one knew what exactly. Mademoiselle Chabaud had learned in the morning from the Public Prosecutor's wife that a special messenger had arrived from Paris.

"All the people in the place are worried and disturbed," this woman, who, living amongst depraved and savage men, had retained her kindness of heart, had confided to her. "Bertrand, who used to be always nagging at me because of my compassion for the traitors, was as pale as a ghost and told me, with a forced laugh, 'I think I feel disposed to acquit every one to-day.'"

It was also known that, previous to the Session of the Tribunal, Pélissier had remarked to Courbis, who looked extremely downcast and sorry for himself and was not talking to anybody, "We are all in the cart now!" that Boudon, senseless as ever, had talked of marching against Paris, but that was all. The news of Robespierre's arrest and death did not reach Nîmes before midnight and, despite the lateness of the hour, spread like wildfire, and was received with universal joy and general relief.

The next day people met in the streets with smiling faces, and newspapers were passed from hand to hand, containing an account of the events of the 9th Thermidor and the overthrow of the tyrant. This "splendid people, that had long groaned beneath an iron rod, was emerging from its stupor." The whirlwind that the Terrorists had unloosed was about to sweep back upon them. The hour of Revenge had struck.

During the afternoon nineteen members of the Popular Society met in the chapel of the old College to "pulverize the conspirators." In vain, Courbis, Giret, and Boudon tried to support Robespierre; they were shouted down with cries of "Stop! Stop!" Courbis tried to escape but was prevented, and Boudon, more lucid in his madness than his accomplices, when prevented from speaking, turned towards Giret, and said, "It is time!" Then, drawing out a pistol that he had concealed under his chair, he blew his brains out.

On the day following, the Revolutionary Tribunal was dissolved, and Courbis, Giret, Palleyay, Baومت, Bertrand, and the other "cannibals," were arrested and taken to prison in chains, surrounded by a cheering crowd. A month later, on the 8th Fructidor, Giret hanged himself in his cell with his sheet. On the 6th Ventôse, Baومت and Bertrand, whilst being transferred from the Palais to the Fort, were murdered on the Cours. Palleyay and Pélissier were condemned to death on the 29th Messidor, Year III (July 17, 1795), but the

sentence was commuted to imprisonment, which allowed them later on to take advantage of the amnesty. Finally the mob invaded the Citadel on the 16th Prairial and murdered Courbis and four other members of the Revolutionary Tribunal in their cells. Justice was accomplished and the Terror at Nîmes over.

After the excitement of the 18th Thermidor, Suzanne Chabaud would have liked nothing better than to leave a country where she had suffered so much and go and settle down in Switzerland, but her sister-in-law was in no state to stand travel of any kind. Indeed, on September 15th, Madame Chabaud gave birth to a little girl who was named Suzanne, after her aunt, and Rosette, in honour of the little seamstress who had assisted her father to take refuge in the ruin. Moreover, were Suzanne to leave France now, it would mean her losing without hope of appeal—like so many other refugees—a fortune that as yet was only sequestered. Dupin advised rather that she should hasten to Paris to get the warrants annulled that were hanging over her brother's head.

The poor girl had no money whatsoever remaining, but her servant offered her the eight or ten Louis that he had saved up while in her service, and some friends made her an advance of funds, so she started off with the watchmaker who had so often come to her assistance, and after eighty-four hours' journey reached Paris, where they put up at a small hotel in the Rue de la Loi. Suzanne spent her days in Government antechambers, and

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only got vague promises or was merely shown out again. Finally she was advised to return to Nîmes, where the new Representative Perrin, who had got there on the 4th Fructidor, was beginning to open the prisons and lending a ready ear to entreaties. She therefore made her way back and sought out Perrin with letters of recommendation she had brought from Paris, and succeeded on the 9th Brumaire, Year III, in getting the warrant against Chabaud nullified. Perrin, on the 6th Vendémiaire, wrote, "The prisoners are blessing the Convention," and on the 6th Frimaire he rendered an account of his mission before the National Convention that was loudly applauded by the Assembly.

Suzanne Chabaud de Latour lived for some time with her brother, and then married Monsieur Juillerat-Chasseur, who was Pastor at Pignan, Nîmes, and Paris. She had one daughter, Marie, who died in 1886, and a son, Paul, who died in 1897.

Antoine Chabaud was successively a member of the Council of Five Hundred, the Tribunal, the Legislative Corps, and finally of the Chamber of Deputies under the Restoration. On October 19, 1814, he was created Baron de Chabaud-Latour, and died on July 20, 1832. He had three children, a daughter, Rosette or Rosine, who died in 1860, and two sons, James (1797-1869), and Ernest, who became Divisional General, Minister of the Interior, from 1874 to 1875, and died in 1885. He had been created Baron de Chabaud-La-Tour by Louis-Philippe.

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In writing this study, the principal guides I have had to rely upon have been *The History of the French Revolution in the Gard*, by Rouvière, and the narrative of Mademoiselle Chabaud de Latour, published by Monsieur Jacques Dumas under the title, *An Episode in the History of the Terror at Nîmes*, being an extract from the personal memoirs of Madame Juillerat-Chasseur, née Suzanne Chabaud de Latour.

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